Searching for Peace in Iraq

Strategic conflict & peace analysis, improving civil society peacebuilding strategies and impact

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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President of PATRIR and Director of the Department of Peace Operations (PATRIR). He is an international expert in mediation and peace processes, systemic peacebuilding, design and implementation of early warning and operational and structural prevention, post war recovery, Strategic Conflict Analysis (SCA), Cumulative Impact and Needs Assessments (CINA) and policies and proposals for improving peacebuilding and peacemaking practice, effectiveness and impact. He consults for governments, foreign ministries, and international and national organizations. He is a co-founder and Director of the Peace Action, Training and Research Institute of Romania (PATRIR) and an advisor to several governments and international and national agencies, including the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), UN country missions, and the All Party Parliamentary Working Group (APPG) on Conflict Issues of the British Parliament.

Process Facilitation: He is invited broadly by UN agencies, national and international organizations and governments as an experienced practitioner and specialist in the development, design and facilitation of mediation and peace processes; peacebuilding programs; conflict sensitivity; strengthening governmental, inter-governmental and NGO policies and institutional capacities for peacebuilding, humanitarian aid, and international development cooperation; preparation, training and deployment of civil peace services; early warning and comprehensive prevention; post-war recovery and infrastructure for peace. He has assisted in the development of several mediation and peace processes. He is also widely invited to assist organizations and agencies in organizational and program development and design, strategic planning and strategy development, and improving implementation of peacebuilding and peace processes.

Training: He has provided more than 260 training programs in 36 countries to governments, national and international organizations, UN agencies, conflict party leadership, diplomats, NGOs, community-based practitioners, military, and others in the fields of mediation, systemic peacebuilding, conflict transformation, early warning and comprehensive prevention, war to peace transitions, reconciliation and healing after violence, conflict sensitivity, strategic peacebuilding, and designing peacebuilding programs. In cooperation with the International Peace and Development Training Centre (IPDTC) he works closely with governments, UN agencies, and organizations who have requested training support to design specialized programs customized to meet the specific needs, objectives, and operating environments in which they work to strengthen their peacebuilding capacity and effectiveness.

Public Lectures and Teaching: He has taught and lectured at universities across Europe, North America, Latin America and Asia including Royal Roads University (Canada), York University's Post-War Recovery and Development Unit (PRDU), the United Nations University (Japan), the European Peace University (Austria), and many others, and is invited faculty at the United Nations University for Peace in Costa Rica. He has been invited to provide more than 400 public talks in 28 countries.

Publications and Research: He is an experienced Researcher and Director of Research Programmes, and is currently Director of the International Research Team on *Searching for Peace in Iraq* which will provide a Strategic Conflict Analysis, Cumulative Impact and Needs Assessment, and Policy Proposals and Recommendations for addressing the conflict in Iraq. In 2009 headed the Palestine and Israel: Improving Civil Society Peacebuilding Strategies, Design, and Impact international research project. He has written and published widely, and was co-author, together with Johan Galtung and Carl Jacobsen, of Searching for Peace: The Road to TRANSCEND (Pluto, 2000 & 2002). He is a member of the Executive Board of the Journal of Peace and Development and an Editor of Oxford University Press' Peace Encyclopedia. He has contributed to several publications, and his current areas of research

focus on peace processes, early warning and comprehensive prevention, strategic conflict analysis, cumulative impact and needs assessments and improving peacebuilding in policy and practice.

Country / Regional Experience: Kai has worked in Afghanistan, India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, southern Thailand, Burma, Cambodia, Aceh-Indonesia, Russia, Moldova, South Eastern Europe, Northern Ireland, Cyprus, Mexico, Colombia, Somalia, Liberia, Sudan, North America, and the Middle East at the invitation of governments, inter-governmental organisations, UN agencies, and local organisations and communities.

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SAWSAN ISMAEL AL ASSAF

M.A, PhD, (2006) University of Baghdad. She is Senior Lecturer in Political Science, international and strategic Studies. In 2007 she was awarded a post-doctoral fellowship in Anthropology Studies in LSE, Uni. of London. Presently she is a Senior Research Fellow at Centre for Gender Studies, SOAS, Uni. of London. She is also a Board Member of Peace Building-Academy for Middle East, Spain & Beirut. She was Researcher and Lecturer in the Centre for International Studies, Uni. of Baghdad till 2010. Lectured in Political Science College, Uni. of Baghdad and also lectured in other Iraqi Universities on Human Rights issues.

In addition to her academic post, she held several research and administrative positions, such as head of the political department in the Centre of Dar al-Iraq for Future Studies, head of Woman's Affairs Department at Somar Organisation for Development and member of the consultation team at Iraqi Centre for Strategic Studies, (Amman).

She worked with many local, regional and global research organizations and universities by participating and presenting papers in different conferences and workshops, both nationally and internationally. She was Senior Visiting Fellow to different Arab and European universities, the International Centre for Future Strategic Studies, Cairo (2006); London School of Economics, Anthropology department 2008; the Centre for Gender Studies, SOAS, Uni. of London (2008), the National University of Ireland, the Irish Centre for Human Rights, Galway: Republic of Ireland 2009 and the Centre for Gender Studies, SOAS, Uni. of London (2010). She also participated in different Arab and International projects about Iraq such us SRF, CARA, and SAR.

She is a founding member of the International Committee for Solidarity with Iraqi Academics (Qatar), a member of the Arab Association for Political Science (Cairo). Iraqi Association for Political Science (Baghdad), and a member of the Woman Solidarity with Independence and Unified Iraq organisation (London).

She published two books (1.War in American Foreign Policy Behavior and its Affects on the International System; book no. 44, published by Centre for International Studies, University of Baghdad, 2002. 2. The Strategy of Deterrence: New American Military Thinking and the International Stability, Beirut, Al-Shabaka Al-Arabia for the researching and publishing, (2008), and many articles and papers in her field in Arabic and English. Her forthcoming book is entitled: (Iraqi Women between Occupation Democratic and American humanitarian intervention Policy).

ALI DHAHIR ALI

He is the Program Director for the Cultural Bridges to Reconciliation in Iraq CBRI - International Relief and Development IRD. An MA graduate in Peace and Reconciliation from Coventry University in the UK, Ali has Twelve years experience in internationally funded peace building programs in Iraq. He has worked in strategic planning; program management; capacity building

and monitoring & evaluation for such entities as the UN FAO, ACDI-VOCA, CHF, IWPR, IRD and USAID's ICAP program. In 2003-6 he managed a large team of community mobilizers working on community development and conflict resolution program in the volatile Sunni Triangle of central Iraq. In 2006–8 Ali was the Monitoring and Evaluation Manager for five USAID's Iraqi community action program ICAP partners (Mercy corps, IRD, CHF, ACDI/VOCA and Counterpart International). He has been with Institute for War and Peace Reporting IWPR since early 2009-10, and has contributed his expertise to significantly expand the tools and activities available to IWPR on programs like Human rights; Elections, Women initiatives, security and safety legal protection and the role of media on each of these programs to enhance transparency and peacebuilding .

Ali is the manager of the Iraqi Peacebuilders Network, a group of 16 Iraqis who participated in a year-long peacebuilders' training program in 2005 with Columbia University. Ali was selected by the members of this diverse group to serve as their leader and to help plan and organize activities throughout the north of Iraq, from Tikrit and Mosul in the west to Kirkuk in the east. Given the intense ethnic rivalries and complex security conditions in this region, Ali knew he was assuming a very difficult task, yet he managed to keep the group together, delivers community-level workshops and seminars on peacebuilding and conflict resolution and moving forward.

Ali is also a veteran trainer and trainer of trainers on conflict sensitivity, management, mitigation and resolution, and has worked freelance for international NGOs in Iraq and with the Kurdistan Regional Government's Office for Coordination of United Nations Affairs.

Ali is dedicated to the democratization and peacebuilding process and has been personally influential in numerous ways to seeing this happen in Iraq. He has created democracy and peacebuilding programs and has seen them through to fruition on the ground via the massive number of programs he led and worked on.

Ali's belief in civic development and tireless persistence in its acceptance in the various communities where he works in the face of adversity is remarkable.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF **DIAGRAMS**

LIST OF **TABLES**

I. ABOUT THE PROJECT

Searching for Peace in Iraq (*SfP-Iraq*) is a major International research project which seeks to increase the impact of peacebuilding strategies and programmes in the country through improving conflict analysis instruments and identifying best practices of the peace work implemented in the past years. *SfP in Iraq* is a "peace-building guide" addressed to Iraqi and international civil society organizations, practitioners, activists, human right defenders, policy-makers and experts.

SfP in Iraq is part of a larger programme under the name; **Laonf initiative: Boosting conflict prevention and resolution capacities among non-violent civil organisations within the frame of the peace-building process in Iraq**, which is defined and implemented by the Institute for Active Nonviolence of Nova-Social Innovation in co-operation with the Iraqi network Laonf group and an international coalition composed by civil society organizations from Italy, United States, France, Germany and Romania who joint their efforts with the aim to build peace in the country, to protect human rights and to ensure human security.

SfP in Iraq must be considered a tool to be consulted in the entire peace-building project designing, implementation, monitoring and evaluation process. The information contained in this publication has been compiled, analyzed and organized by 3 international and Iraqi researchers; Kai Frithjof Brand-Jacobsen (research's director), Dra. Sawsan Ismael Al-Assaf and Ali Dhahir Ali, with the support of a research assistance team from Iraq and Europe.

During this 2-year project, the research team has conducted 100 interviews to key actors of the Iraqi society as well as representatives of international organizations (Please see ANNEX I), reviewed extensive literature about Iraq and implemented needs assessments missions to the country with several stakeholders meetings, with the aim to:

- Analyze the roots causes of the conflict, dynamics and actors involved;
- Determine possible future scenarios
- Identify key issues and challenges to increase freedom and achieve peace;
- Scrutinize the peace work implemented in the past years, identifying best practices and weaknesses;
- Define peace-building recommendations.

After the withdrawal of US troops and the increased presence of new actors in the country such us international private military & security companies, Iraq is today in a crucial moment. Iraqi and international activists, Human Rights Defenders, UN agencies and NGOs committed to build peace should integrate efforts to prevent a new wave of sectarian violence, through networking and linking their work with experts and researchers who are producing key conflict analysis. Only in that manner is possible to increase the impact of the peace-building and nonviolence strategies in Iraq.

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II. INTRODUCTION

Searching for Peace in Iraq (*SfP*) in its operational phase was carried out principally from February 2010 to August 2011. The period before that, from November 2009 to the beginning of February 2010 involved the hiring of a research team and initial outlining of the research methodology that would guide the process. The period after, from May to July 2011 saw the principal compiling of the current report based upon extensive interviews, research, and initial report drafts compiled by the projects Iraqi researchers.

Methodology

SfP involved in total interviews with 100 individuals and organisations from all across Iraq (North, Centre, South), Iraqis outside Iraq, throughout the Middle East, and internationals working in or on Iraq. The interviews were carried out in person in Iraq, on-site in London, and by phone and skype. Several interviewees also sent in additional responses through e-mail and provided supporting documents and background materials, project reports, and analysis and evaluations of the situation in Iraq and / or of peacebuilding and other measures and interventions to address it.

Interviewees came from a broad range of sectors and backgrounds, including:

- Political Leaders
- Government Officials
- Religious Leaders
- Tribal & Community Leaders
- Combatants & Ex-Combatants
- Analysts
- Academics
- Journalists & Editors
- NGO Staff And Directors
- Staff Of International NGOS
- Staff of the UN and other international organisations
- Donors

These interviews were then complemented with extensive review of written and published materials in Arabic, Kurdish and English, adding up to more than 6000 pages worth.

The Report: A Reference Kit

The report itself is meant to be a *reference kit* for those working on peacebuilding and nonviolence in Iraq, including government officials, national and international civil society organisations, universities, private centres, donors, UN agencies and others. It is made up of four Sections:

Part 1: *Strategic Conflict Intelligence* — This reviews policies and issues in the immediate period following the invasion of Iraq and traces how key strategic failures contributed to instability and the rise of violent sectarianism in Iraq. This section was guided by insights drawn from interviews and Iraqi researchers in the *Searching for Peace in Iraq* project but draws heavily upon documentation and analysis provided in key reviews of this period.

Part 2: *Fault Lines* — This section reviews key challenges and issues in Iraq identified during the period of implementation of the project based upon interviews and extensive review of key reference documents and resources. It raises a broader range of issues than other publications on peacebuilding, conflict transformation and nonviolence in Iraq often address, but which are of key importance. Unless these issues are effectively addressed, prospects for a lasting, sustainable and inclusive peace which meets the needs and interests of all the people of Iraq remain weak.

Part 3: *Cumulative Impact and Needs Assessment* — This section contains an identification of peacebuilding efforts in Iraq today and an evaluation of strengths and challenges. Core types of activities as identified by organisations working in Iraq are presented, together with analysis of their impact and the theories of change which guide them. Due to the nature of the project and its objectives, this report identifies 'types' of peacebuilding engagements, but was not able to go as thoroughly as should be done into a comprehensive review of their actual impact, as well as the broader range of challenges facing peacebuilding work in Iraq today —though several of these are addressed.

Part 4: *Recommendations* — Provides a brief account of recommendations brought forward in interviews to end the conflict, address core driving factors of violence in Iraq today and contribute to sustainable peace, and ensure the implementation of a real democracy in Iraq. This section, in many ways the most important, remains the weakest in the publication as time was limited for the final stages of engagement with Iraqi stakeholders to hear their perspectives and recommendations for what needs to be done. The organizers behind *Searching for Peace in Iraq* intend to take this forward in next steps of their engagement, and will bring this out as a follow-up publication. Feed-back on initial recommendations provided here, as well as suggestions for what else should be added, are welcomed.

Searching for Peace in Iraq is part of an on-going effort to provide a platform for bringing out the voices, perspectives and experiences of people across Iraq and of those working in peacebuilding and conflict transformation in the country. It draws extensively upon already existing publications and works to bring together key facts, figures and trends analysis —as well as lessons identified— to help inform and improve future peacebuilding efforts in the country.

It is the hopes of the authors that this effort will make at least a small contribution to helping to support the people of Iraq in building a lasting and sustainable peace for their country. A peace in which the human rights, identity and needs of all Iraq's people are respected and realised.

The authors offer their deep thanks and appreciation to all the interviewees and organisations who gave their time to this project, and hopes that the final publication goes some way towards realising their aspirations, and reflecting the issues they felt were important. Given the vast range of opinions and perspective expressed —and often contradictory information— the authors have done their best to reflect different views, while trying to highlight key issues and challenges facing the country. In places where the assessment may seem overly negative or overly positive, this itself reflects very different perspectives raised through the interviews. We hope the overall report will provide balance, as well as making visible to people the very real challenges facing the country —and the reality that much, much more needs to be done, but also, that what is done needs to be done much better.

PART 1

STRATEGIC CONFLICT INTELLIGENCE: AN ANALYSIS

Strategic Conflict Intelligence (SCI) can be defined as comprehensive and rigorous understanding of the key conflict dynamics, underlying root causes, and conflict factors affecting and shaping a particular conflict situation. It includes knowledge of key actors, issues, goals and interests, roles of different stakeholders, how stakeholders and actors perceive each other and the conflict, how they perceive you, conflict strategies and likely scenarios, the conflict's history and background, current context, risk factors and much more. Cultural sensitivity and understanding of the peoples and communities involved in and affected by the conflict are central. Attention to nuance is essential. The situation for different stakeholders, groups, or parts and regions of a country will vary. Application of one-size fits all measures or readings of a situation almost always inadequate.

Most importantly: *strategic conflict intelligence* refers to the ability to use this knowledge to guide appropriate interventions and measures to address conflict factors and root causes and to support policy and operational engagements to strengthen stabilisation, peacebuilding, conflict transformation, and supporting a community/society/country to build resilient capacities to address root causes, meet people's basic needs, and transform future conflicts constructively and effectively through legitimate and peaceful means. Strategic conflict analysis calls for accurate understanding of a situation, rather than incomplete or partial perspectives, assumptions, or prejudices which may lead to erroneous conclusions and policy, programme or project decisions.

Strategic conflict intelligence is essential for those working on the ground in a conflict area, as well as policy makers, political leadership, donors, practitioners, and national, regional and international organisations and agencies working to address conflict dynamics and building sustainable peace. At its best, it should be carried out in a manner that engages multiple stakeholders, actors and sectors of a society —including state, non-state, civil society, business, traditional leaders, women, youth, and others— so that those affected and involved *own* the process of analyzing and understanding the factors and issues shaping the conflict in their community / country and in the development of measures and responses to address them.

Its absence —together with the exclusion of key stakeholders and parties to a conflict and ignoring of their needs and perspectives— can lead to measures which have either limited or no sustainable or strategic impact on conflict dynamics and peacebuilding, or which contribute to the escalation and worsening of conflict and violence. *Strategic conflict intelligence* includes but is not limited to accurate, *multi-partial* needs assessments and appropriate prioritising of measures and responses to address them. Its unique dimension is a firm grasp of conflict dynamics and complexities, and identification of *appropriate* proactive measures and response options.

Extensive interviews and research conducted by *SfP* Iraq identified the complete breakdown and failure of appropriate strategic conflict intelligence in the pre-war planning and early phases of the war in Iraq. Information available, through the UN, Embassies, and other sources on the ground was either disregarded or ignored. Ideology and pre-determined frameworks of analysis dominated and pre-empted reasoned assessment and information gathering. Voices which reflected different 'truths' were sidelined. This played a significant role in the adoption and implementation of polices and measures which contributed to escalation of violence and worsening conditions in Iraq. It directly affected the ability of the Occupation authorities to manage transition. This is a key lesson. While the situation has improved from this extreme, the quality of strategic conflict intelligence in Iraq —of a thorough, accurate, and multi-partial understanding and analysis of the dynamics and conflicts in and affecting Iraq available to and informing the decision-making of key stakeholders —remains limited for many actors. Greater attention should be given to addressing this continuing gap.

A Failure in Strategic Conflict Intelligence: The US-led War in Iraq

The failure of the United States government and its agencies (political and military) in the field of *strategic conflict analysis* and understanding of the situation in Iraq had a catastrophic impact. An almost complete breakdown in proper conflict intelligence and the failure to develop accurate understanding of the situation on the part of both military and political administration played a major role in shaping policies which directly contributed to the escalation of war and violence which otherwise could have been avoided or significantly mitigated.

These lessons critically need to be learned. While the presence of external occupation forces would likely have provoked resistance by some sectors of the Iraqi population under almost any circumstances, this could have been significantly reduced. Clear opportunities to do so were missed —often due to faulty intelligence, imposed agendas and limited understanding of the situation. The systemic failure to properly plan, prepare for, and implement transition, to gain an accurate understanding of dynamics on the ground, to authentically and respectfully engage the Iraqi population and its leadership, as well as the inability to learn from previous war/post-war and regime transitions, combined with the use of escalatory policies and measures which poured fuel onto the fire created a context which contributed to breakdown, destabilisation, and wide-spread escalation of violence, war and sectarian strife[1]. It is this context which led to the forced displacement of millions of Iraqis, the deaths and injuring of hundreds of thousands more, and widespread psycho-social trauma. Most of this —even following the initial invasion and occupation of the country— could have been avoided.

Pre-war planning and the early phases of the occupation of Iraq exhibited[2]:

1. Policy and decision-making extensively guided by ideology and wishful thinking rather than clear and accurate understanding of the situation on the ground[3];
2. A focus on 'elite' politics and events in the 'green zone' to the neglect of events on the street, the Iraqi population, and dynamics at the grass-roots level (in villages, mosques, neighbourhoods)[4];
3. Excessive focus on 'deadlines' and 'milestones' / targets devoid of accurate understanding of process, dynamics, and actual impact and developments on the ground;
4. Over reliance on often poorly trained / poorly prepared 'experts' who were not familiar with Iraq and had limited knowledge of the country's social, historical, economic and political dynamics, or knowledge of Arabic or Kurdish;
5. A failure to properly understand or respect the differing needs, perspectives and interests of Iraq's various population groups or how to engage with them;
6. A failure to grasp / comprehend the impact of the previous decades of war, sanctions, and authoritarian leadership on Iraq's state institutions and social fabric[5];
7. A failure to understand the emerging insurgency and resistance to US occupation;
8. A failure to understand how actions and decisions taken by the occupation would be perceived by different population groups and sectors in Iraq

While much of this and its negative impacts has gradually come to be recognized and addressed, their prevalence in the early phase of the war / occupation played a significant role in shaping the dynamics of post-invasion Iraq. US forces hoped and expected to be greeted as liberators upon their entry into Iraq[6]. Prior to the war, planners had assumed that military intervention could remove Saddam Hussein and other the top level leadership without seriously impacting the functions of the state at large and stability in the country[7]. Opposition to US presence was presented as opposition to the 'freedom', 'democracy' and 'liberty' that presence was believed to be bringing —and responded to with military force. Opponents were labelled as 'Anti-Iraqi Forces'. Ensconced in the Green Zone or with lightning quick trips to other areas of the country, policy and decision-makers showed little ability or willingness to understand how US presence was experienced in the streets in Iraq. This extended to limited understanding of the feelings, needs and interests of the population. Very many of those responsible for taking decisions had little or no previous

background in Iraq or in other post-war / transition countries. Those with experience were in many cases rapidly replaced or marginalized. "Experts" on Iraq from Institutions such as the Brookings Institution, the American Enterprise Institute, or the Centre for Strategic International Studies, and others, in several cases had limited background or real expertise in the country[8]. In many cases, if they visited Iraq they often moved from base to base and had limited opportunities to know or substantially engage with the Iraqi population[9]. Turnover of personnel in the beginning of the occupation was frequent and rapid. Most did not know Arabic, Kurdish or other languages spoken by the people of Iraq.

Prior to the invasion, US planners failed to draw upon extensive information and materials available from Embassies and UN Missions and teams to understand the situation in the country[10]. There was limited or no real understanding of changes wrought in Iraq after decades of war, violence and a highly centralized authoritarian regime. Instead, excessive faith and conviction were placed upon the testimonies and assessments of opposition political forces in exile in London, the United States, or throughout the region, and often "naive, ideological or self-serving analysis of Iraq" by external pundits and 'experts' — frequently bearing little or no relation to actual conditions on the ground[11]. Regardless of previous misreading and misunderstandings of the situation, however, it was the decisions and actions taken (1) in the conduct of the invasion and (2) in the implementation of the occupation which gave rise to the vortex of violence which would consume Iraq and — while much diminished from its earlier heights— continues to this day.

As resistance to the occupation took off, US planners and policy makers showed a signal failure to appreciate the underlying causes, factors and origins of the insurgency. Senior administration officials assigned opposition to 'regime dead-enders' and 'external forces'. In the very months in which the insurgency was beginning to escalate and intensify, key architects of the war and post-war policy predicted smooth transition towards an increasingly secure Iraq (cf statements by Rumsfeld, Wolfowitz, Feith and others).

On Resistance

Part of the *SfP* Iraqi researchers team note that historically many elements of Iraqi society have resisted external interventions, interference and 'imperialism' in the country. Interviewees and Iraqi researchers cited the 1920 revolution against the British occupation as an example. Iraq, a proud country with a long and rich history, shares this characteristic with many other countries in the region and internationally —with opposition across many parts of the population to external interference in the internal affairs of the country and violation of Iraq's sovereignty. While many military and Iraqi and international experts note that much of the Iraqi army did not actively resist the invasion and many units withdrew from their barracks and positions— expecting to be called up after to assist in stabilization and the rebuilding of Iraq —several Iraqis also note resistance to the American invasion on 20th March 2003, the battles in Al-Faw, Am-Qaser, Al-Nassirya , and on the Al- Matar battle (the Airport battle) in Baghdad. While the 9th of April saw the toppling of Saddam Hussein's statue, on the 10th of April the first American soldier was killed by the Iraqi resistance, which declared that the war had not yet finished. As noted elsewhere in this report, the US intervention in Iraq, particularly during the CPA, miscalculated the ability, sources and motivation of much of the Iraqi resistance, preferring instead to label them as 'regime dead-enders'.

Ahmed Hashim, whose publication *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq* draws upon research commissioned by the US military, ascribes this to the fact that "US knowledge or understanding of the political and socioeconomic situation on the ground in Iraq both before and in the aftermath of the collapse of the regime was almost nonexistent." [12] The Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) published a report equally critical of the military's intelligence gathering capabilities[13]. This highlighted deficiencies including poorly prepared personnel, insufficient translators or misuse of translators, and the poor functioning of the network intended to enable intelligence teams to convey time-sensitive information among them —which was assessed to work so poorly that it might as well not exist.

The failure of intelligence, however, was not simply due to an inability to gather information or the lack of technical capability and country expertise. The role of ideology and determination to see the world according to a pre-conceived frame was a defining factor of US political-military-strategic *weltanschaung* and conflict culture. The 'enemy' was painted as a monolithic, unreasoning and illegitimate force. As a junior staff officer involved in daily operations at the Coalition's Combined Joint Task Force 7 (CJTF-7) Headquarters noted, "differentiation was not normally discussed." [14] The main failure in this period, as observed by former US Ambassador to Croatia Peter Galbraith who was a vocal and outspoken critic of the implementation of the occupation in Iraq, was that the US administration and occupation authorities "consistently substituted wishful thinking for analysis and hope for strategy." [15] They saw Iraq "not as it is, but as we wished it were." And, ominously, they failed to consider even the possibility of adverse consequences of the decisions they took.[16]

Ideologies of Liberation / Occupation

Ideology: a. "the body of doctrine, myth, belief, etc. that guides an individual, social movement, institution, class, or large group" [17]
b. "set of ideas that constitutes one's goals, expectations, and actions. An ideology can be thought of as a comprehensive vision, as a way of looking at things … or a set of ideas proposed by the dominant class of a society to all members of this society … The main purpose behind an ideology is to offer either change in society, or adherence to a set of ideals where conformity already exists... Implicitly every political tendency entails an ideology whether or not it is propounded as an explicit system of thought." [18]

Ideology —consciously or unconsciously— plays a key role in affecting policy, programs and decisions. In the case of the United States' presence in Iraq, ideology played a *defining* role in (1) the invasion and occupation of the country and (2) how it was implemented. This had a pronounced impact on the situation in Iraq and retains potential to affect other countries. While much attention has been given to the role of neoconservative ideologues and advocates in the promotion of the war and in the early years of political-military occupation, this is only one of several key strands in US foreign policy thinking which contributed to the war —and which retain strong influence in US policy and decision-making beyond Iraq.[19] These include[20]:

"Liberal Wilsonian Internationalists": advocating proactive US engagement to spread 'democracy' and 'liberty', including through —when "required"— the use of military force;

The "Christian Right": strong elements of which promote the sacred duty of the US to confront and challenge 'evil' in the World and the avenging power of US military force;

"Proponents of a Muscular American Nationalism": who support America's legitimate right to use military force to promote its interests globally.

At least 13 ideological strands played a major role in shaping US engagement in Iraq. These included:

War against Terror
The war in Iraq was presented as a 'key front' in the 'War against Terror'. Saddam Hussein was said to be supporting Al Qaeda and the US government attempted to present 'proof' of links. Iraq was named as a member of the 'Axis of Evil' and therefore a threat to the United States[21]. Many Americans were told that it would be better to confront terrorism abroad than to wait for it to strike at the US. Though there were no links between the Iraqi government and Al Qaeda, the idea that the war in Iraq was a front in the broader war on terror formed a key pillar in the ideology of invasion and occupation.

Weapons of Mass Destruction

Linked to this was the idea that Iraq maintained weapons of mass destruction and the will and intent to use them, and was therefore a clear and present threat to both the United States and broader international peace and security. In mean time the Iraq Survey group found no signs of weapons of mass destruction or links to terrorism, the WMD claim and 'evidence' fabricated to support US strategy which used to legitimise the need for invasion.[22]

Liberation of Iraq

Following the invasion and failure to discover the presence of WMDs, senior administration officials and spokespersons identified the *liberation* of Iraq as the central goal of Operation Iraqi Freedom.[23] Saddam Hussein was seen as a ruthless and brutal dictator who had oppressed his people and led Iraq into numerous wars in the region. Massacres of the Kurds and Shiites and brutal repression of any uprisings against him were given as evidence of the need for regime change. It was believed that American forces would be welcomed as liberators by the Kurds and Shia of Iraq, much as they had been in France in World War II.[24] That for many Iraqis the US presence in Iraq was seen as an *occupation* and not as *liberation* was outside the *weltanschaung* and inconceivable for many in the US administration and public.[25]

Democratic Transformation and the Spread of Democracy

Successful democratic transformation in Iraq would serve as a beacon for freedom and democratic transformation throughout the entire Middle East. US administration and the CPA saw it as their mandate and mission to transform Iraq into a model democratic society which could serve as an example for others in the region[26].

FUNCTION: These first four ideological strands served to legitimise for many Americans and US leadership their intervention in Iraq. They provided the mandate legitimising US presence.

Straussian / Platonian Leadership

The central tenets of Straussian and Platonian political philosophy are of the wise elite who exercise power over people to maintain harmony, order and guide them for their own good and improvement[27]. This was central to the US view of its role in Iraq, where America's noble aspirations for Iraq and its people were to be achieved through the provision of benign guidance and leadership offered from the US administration and CPA and later the US Embassy in Iraq. In the early years of the American occupation US administrators and contractors had virtual absolute authority on many aspects of Iraqi governance and administration. American contractors, advisors and the US government were to guide Iraq in its democratisation.

FUNCTION: This, combined with the spread of democracy and freedom, played a key role in the mindset of US administrators, contractors and advisors. Many saw themselves as being there to serve the Iraqi people 'for their own good' and saw opposition as signs of backwardness, inability to understand democracy, or lack of gratitude for what the US was doing.

Regime Dead Enders

Opponents to the US presence / occupation in Iraq were dismissed as 'dead enders' standing against and resisting the US because they opposed the spread of 'freedom' and 'democracy'. Little effort was made to search for or understand the differing motives of various groups behind the insurgency. The doctrine that opponents of US presence were die-hard extremists who would quickly be defeated had a major impact on early US political-military response and served to escalate the war significantly[28].

Foreign Terrorists

In order to avoid the notion that there was opposition to US presence from within the Iraqi population, emphasis was placed on the role played by foreign terrorists in order to place the military effort in the context of the wider war on terror. While foreign fighters did play a key role in affecting the dynamics of the conflict and war in Iraq, emphasis on foreign fighters also served an ideological purpose. The combination of painting armed resistance to the US presence as either regime dead enders or foreign terrorists allowed the US military and administration to coin the term 'anti-Iraqi forces'. In this case, military confrontation and defeat of these opponents of 'freedom and democracy' for Iraq was seen as a legitimate role for the US military. Focus on 'foreign terrorists' hampered efforts to understand the real motives and possible legitimate reasons for domestic opposition to US occupation in Iraq. As pointed out by Major General Martin Dempsey and others, the idea of foreign fighters flooding Iraq was 'a misconception'. [29]

FUNCTION: Provided an explanatory framework for armed opposition. Prevented necessity of trying to understand motives and interests of those resisting / opposing US presence in Iraq. [30]

Shia: A Thankful Strategic Ally

Early US policy in Iraq was also strongly shaped by the idea that the Shia population would welcome US forces as liberators and become a strategic ally of the US in the region and a bulwark against both Iranian influence and Sunni extremism. It was thought that the Shia would 'rise joyfully' and welcome US forces into the country and "be eternally grateful to the US for liberating them from the horrors of Saddam Hussein's regime"[31]. Many within the US administration were surprised by the level of anti-US sentiment they confronted and early calls from Shia leaders for withdrawal now that Saddam Hussein had been removed, and warning the United States not to impose an occupation and to facilitate transition to Iraqi control. Within the administration and CPA there appears to have been little appreciation or understanding of the Shia population, its aspirations, needs, and how it would react to US presence in Iraq. [32]

Sunnis: They don't deserve anything

At the opposite end to the early view of the Shia population in Iraq was a mindset amongst senior administration officials and policy makers that was profoundly hostile to Sunni Arabs in Iraq. Early measures taken by the CPA —dissolution of the Ba'ath party, dissolution of the Iraqi Army, indifferent treatment of Sunnis— were perceived by many Sunni Iraqis as a direct attack upon their community and Iraq as a country. Within the administration many saw Sunnis as resenting their 'removal from power' and inherently hostile to US presence in Iraq. Sunnis were seen to have unduly benefitted from Saddam Hussein's regime and to be complicit in his rule. Sunni concerns were frequently dismissed as unimportant and the result of their loss of prestige and position. In the early period of the Occupation, few efforts were made to take Sunni concerns seriously and to engage with them as a key constituency in Iraq. The rising insurgency reinforced the view for many US officials that Sunnis were the 'enemy' of freedom and democracy.[33]

FUNCTION: Provided the early framework for many US administration officials and policy makers for understanding Iraq. The negative perception of the Sunni population and poor understanding of the Shia population, its distinct segments, and their legitimate interests and views, would continue to play a major role in shaping US engagement in Iraq in the first years of the occupation.

Unready for Democracy: Fundamentally Flawed

Throughout the 8 years since the US invasion of Iraq many American policy makers and advisors have posited that Iraq was (is) 'unready for democracy'. This has sometimes been

attributed to democracy being foreign to the 'Muslim' or 'Arab' culture and character. This was the flaw affecting the well-intentioned support provided by the US. It failed to take root because 'Iraqis weren't ready' for it or weren't able to understand democracy.

It's Iraqis Fault

As the war continued, increasing criticism was placed upon Iraqi political leadership and officials. Shortcomings in the political process, wide-spread corruption and abuse of power, transformation of Ministries into fiefdoms for different parties, were all identified as indicators of Iraq's failure to responsibly manage its own transition. As Iraq increasingly disappeared from headlines in the United States in later 2007 and onwards, continuing difficulties were seen to be the responsibility of Iraqis. The US would continue to attempt to provide support, assistance, and work as a neutral mediator[34].

FUNCTION: Placing responsibility for instability in Iraq upon the shoulders of the Iraqi government and people / culture absolves the US from needing to assess and be held accountable for its role in the violence and chaos in Iraq following the invasion. The key lessons which should be drawn from this —for Iraq, for the US, for the world community— have still not been adequately understood.

Inherent Goodness / Righteousness

Many in the American public and administration premise their engagement in Iraq upon their belief in the inherent goodness / righteousness of the United States. With this as their framework it was difficult to accept opposition to US engagement and presence in Iraq. If the United States was by definition good and working for the promotion of freedom, democracy and human rights in the region and had liberated the people of Iraq from Saddam Hussein, then opposition to the United States in Iraq was clearly evil, and opposing the good the US was trying to bring. Suicide bombings and attacks on civilian populations further reinforced this image.

Sacred Duty: Reluctant Policeman of the World

Underlying and supporting this is the conception that the US is called upon and selflessly provides the role of 'policeman' to maintain peace and security in the world, and that while others benefit from this role they often unfairly / unduly criticize the US for its interventions.

FUNCTION: Address key aspects of how the US administration and population view their role in the world. When confronted with criticism of the invasion of Iraq and armed resistance on the ground, these pillars provided a legitimising rationale which impeded criticism and re-enforced the idea of America's sacred mandate and mission.

ASSESSMENT

The US government and occupation authority in Iraq were reinforced by a vast apparatus of analysts, pundits, experts, lobbyists, academics, consultants and political advisors who largely agreed upon and espoused these premises.[35] This created a rigid ideological framework through which events in Iraq and the world more broadly were interpreted. Critical voices were dismissed. Physical separation and limited opportunities for interaction with the Iraqi population —due to seclusion in military bases and the green zone, lack of local language knowledge, and the increasing violence of the occupation and resistance— further limited opportunities for US soldiers and administrators to interact with ordinary Iraqis and have an opportunity to question or challenge their own assumptions. This severely hampered the ability of the US administration and military to properly analyse, assess and understand actual conditions and developments.[36] Demonization of those opposing US presence in Iraq contributed to the rise of a violent military dynamic rather than a national process of inclusion, consolidation and transition. While this process would have been difficult under any circumstances in a country which had suffered decades of war and authoritarianism,

it was made much more difficult by the ideological blinders which fundamentally defined the direction and manner of occupation policies and actions on the ground. Belief in the inherent goodness and right of the US administration in Iraq limited meaningful efforts to understand how different strands of the Iraqi population viewed US presence. A caricatured interpretation of Iraq and the broader Middle East combined with what could be characterized as racist and bigoted views held in Washington and throughout many levels of the political / military occupation presence, strongly impacted upon policy and decision making, how power was exercised and by *whom*[37]. Across party / ideological lines in the United States, meaningful engagement and evaluation to understand how US ideology and intervention impacted upon the unfolding situation in Iraq was limited. Even many who opposed US presence in Iraq were content to hear less of the occupation and did not seek to hold the government/ country accountable for its actions in Iraq. It was easier to identify and look for faults in the Iraqis themselves, ascribing them to religion, culture, the lasting legacy of the previous regime, or 'external interference' by neighbouring countries.

> The Iraqi people were divided between those who were with the occupation and those who were against it. Unfortunately, the general idea which the occupier and the collaborators were spreading says that the Sunni people were against the (liberation) and the Shia and the Kurds were with the (liberation). Mean while the first operation to resist the occupation and against the US troops was on the 10th of April in Al-Adhamiya city in Baghdad, in which the first American soldier was killed. Consequently Since 10th of April 2003 there was a struggle between two ideologies in Iraqi society, one called what happened in Iraq an occupation and the other called it liberation. Both ideologies have an effective role in the society which divided the whole society between them. I have to admit that this struggle is standing out of the scope of the differences according to the sect and ethnicity.
>
> *SfP researchers*

Correcting Course

By 2006 – 2007, and in some cases as early as 2004 – 2005, many of these premises, at least in their application in Iraq, began to be increasingly challenged (particularly by the military but also by the State Department and others). A serious review and changes in key aspects of US policy were effected, though mainly dealing with US military strategy and operations, and reducing 'visibility' of US presence following the increased projection of force during the surge and gradual strengthening of Iraqi state and security institutions. It was their impact, however, on pre-war planning and post-war occupation which played a central and pivotal role in the escalation of violence in Iraq.

Rigorous and open analysis and discussion of how ideology influenced the US decision to invade Iraq and shaped its pre-war planning and early post-invasion policies and occupation, has not taken place —at least not in public. While a number of excellent publications and studies have been carried out— including several by the US military itself or those associated with it —these remain in the purview of expert discussion and have not had an impact on broader public awareness. While a change of elected President in the United States was seen by many as signalling a shift away from these policies, their ideological roots lie deeper, and stretch across party lines. This retains relevance for Iraq and for potential future interventions and wars.

Merton's 5 Principles

In his book The Occupation of Iraq: Winning the War, Losing the Peace, former Minister of Trade and Minister of Defence in the Iraqi Interim Governing Council, Ali A. Allawi cites sociologist Robert Merton and his 1936 paper 'The unanticipated Consequences of Purposive Social Action'.[38] In it, Merton identified five sources of 'unanticipated consequences' to policy measures:

1. Ignorance of true conditions pertaining;
2. Error in inference;
3. The primacy of immediate interests;
4. The ideological imperative / imperative of basic values; and
5. Self fulfilling prophecy

All five of these afflicted US planning and engagement in Iraq. Ignorance of conditions in Iraq was systematic. Conclusions and assessments reached through flawed understanding —and the policies they gave rise to— created a post-invasion context which fuelled sectarian violence rather than stabilisation and transition. Interests and ideology imposed themselves strongly on pre-war planning and post-war occupation. All of these contributed to creating many of the factors which motivated US invasion (which had not existed *in fact* at the time of the invasion). Clearest amongst these was the rise of what the US labelled and identified as terrorist organisations in Iraq. Merton argued that the failure of policy makers to mitigate against these dynamics would contribute to undesired consequences of policies. In the case of countries in transition, the impact of this failure is potentially devastating. There is a clear need to improve checks and balances to restrain the negative impact and consequences of poor conflict intelligence and overly ideological approaches to addressing key issues of conflicts and national and international peace and security.

US Pre-War Planning: A Critical Gap

One of the clearest factors which contributed to the rise in violence and breakdown in security and control in Iraq after the invasion was the failure to plan for post-war stabilization prior to the war. Although the US Administration had been preparing for the war in Iraq for more than a year, little consideration was given to how to administer the country post-invasion, or how to re-establish and maintain order, security and basic services after the removal of the Iraqi leadership. The detailed requirements, planning and preparation which would be needed to manage the complex task of transferring control from a highly centralized, authoritarian regime to an effective form of government which would hold broad legitimacy with the people of Iraq was not done. [39]

Most strategic writers and political scientists believe the US did not have a strategy for Iraq at the time of its invasion and occupation in April 2003. That was what made a majority of such analysts describe the US position in Iraq as a "quagmire" or a "crisis". This led some strategic experts, like Anthony Cordesman and Zbigniew Brzezinski, to focus on America's failure in Iraq as being due to the lack of any obvious policy and clear strategy. Yet it seems that the Bush administration actually followed a quite realistic strategy in Iraq. That strategy gave priority to the actual occupation of Iraq, after which events on the ground would be allowed to determine strategy. That strategy, such as it was, was not only shaped by Bush and his administration, but by Iraq's neighbours and international non-state actors, who found in Iraq a battleground to fight the US. Inside Iraq, furthermore, there were divisions, some deliberately created, between those who collaborated with the occupying US forces and those who were opposed, as well as between sectarian communities.

Sawsan Al-Assaf, *Bitterlemons-international Org. 2009*

As the army's own assessment states: "The difficulty in Iraq in April and May 2003 for the Army, and the other Services, was that the transition to a new campaign was not well thought out, planned for, and prepared for before it began. Additionally, the assumptions about the nature of post-Saddam Iraq on which the transition was planned proved to be largely incorrect.

Donald Wrigth, et all. *On Point II: Transition to the New Campaign* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2008) p. 568 quoted in Richard P. Rumelt *Good Strategy, Bad Strategy: The Difference and Why it Matters*, p. 98

Identification, selection and proper pre-deployment training and preparation of staff who would be selected to fulfil critical roles and responsibilities in the post-war administration did not happen. Many positions were filled only after the invasion, and these frequently with people dramatically under- or not qualified[40]. Proper planning for how to provide security and stability in a country the size of Iraq after the invasion, which would have included measures to prevent outbreaks of violence, disorder and the rise of an insurgency, did not take place.[41] For a country of more than 25 million people which had experienced decades of war and sanctions, minimal effort was extended to ensure stability in post-invasion Iraq. The scale of reconstruction needs was also not understood. Pre-war planners expected that funds needed to reconstruct Iraq would come primarily from Iraqi oil money and European and other donors.[42] The model envisioned by US war planners would be that of "a quick war, followed by a seamless assumption of power by the Iraqis from inside and outside the country, all working under the benign tutelage of a short-term occupation authority. Services would be quickly established; oil production would be increased; local elections would soon be held; and the occupying powers would then depart quickly." [43]

Responsibility for planning for post-war Iraq was assigned to the Department of Defence, rather than the State Department.[44] The Office for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance (ORHA) which would initially be responsible for post-war administration was established on January 20th 2003, just two months before the war.[45] It would be responsible both for the humanitarian consequences of the war and administration of Iraq after the

invasion. Under Secretary for Defence Douglas Feith who was given overall control over post-war planning had no prior professional experience or necessary competencies for the role.[46] Initial planning was based upon the scenario that the Iraqi state would function and fulfil critical roles within two months after the invasion. Senior military such as General Franks briefed commanders on plans based on the premise that a functioning Iraqi government would be up and running within 30 – 60 days after the fall of the regime. No contingency plans were prepared in case this scenario failed to materialise, and no measures were prepared to ensure stability and continued functioning of state institutions which had been affected by years of sanctions. In fact, in the first months of the Occupation US administrators would enact measures which would cripple the functional capacity of the Iraqi state and which would take years to rebuild.

Plans for the size of the military force to be deployed in Iraq clashed with the reality of the scale of the task they would confront and failed to take into account recommendations of senior military and experts in post-war transition and recovery[47]. No plans were made either for how to engage with Iraqi military and security forces or for the adequate disposition of stabilisation forces across the country to prevent the creation of a security vacuum immediately after an invasion and war.

ANBAR — 'Economy of Force'

During the war in Iraq Anbar province would become a key stronghold of the resistance. In initial pre-war plans from October 2002 additional troops were to be deployed to this province but in January 2003 these plans were dropped. Anbar was assessed to be an 'economy of force area' calling for minimal troop deployment. By late 2003 as the scale of the challenge in the province became evident additional forces were sent. "One regiment of 4,400 troops was responsible for security, stability and governance of a territory consisting of more than six hundred square miles and over a million Iraqis."[48] The task was virtually impossible. Inadequacy of forces created a security vacuum.

Initial pre-war planning called for forces to be withdrawn after a brief period (initial combat forces would be withdrawn in 60 days and follow-on forces within 120 days).[49] Many regions of Iraq would remain virtually unoccupied and without stabilisation forces, security or state/administrative presence.[50] This flew in the face of lessons known from post-war stabilisation and transition contexts.[51] Continuing resistance to the US invasion and occupation was not planned or foreseen. US soldiers were told they would be greeted with 'delirious joy' and welcomed as liberators.[52] The extent of the resistance and cool reception given to the occupation forces in many parts of the country was a surprise (and disappointment) to US soldiers.

"The amount of resistance, I don't understand. We're there to help them get them out of the regime."
Staff Sergeant of 1st Batallion, 30th Infantry Regiment out of Fort Benning, Georgia[53]

"We were very surprised. We were told when we were going through Nasiriyah that we would see little to no resistance."
Lance Corporal 2nd Battalion, 8th USMC[54]

"Every briefing on post-war Iraq I attended never mentioned any of this [resistance]"
Civilian Policy Advisor[55]

Pre-War Planning failed:
1. To assess and understand the scale of the task and what would be involved in post-war Iraq;
2. To plan and prepare for administration and governance of the country;
3. To ensure effective stabilisation and security and measures to prevent the development of an insurgency or outbreak of armed violence;
4. To grasp and adequately budget for the scale of reconstruction and recovery needs, including immediate tasks to address critical needs of the population and provide basic services;
5. To ensure well selected, and properly prepared, briefed and trained staff with the necessary competencies and capabilities to work in a challenging transition and post-war context;
6. To ensure effective coordination amongst all actors and state and non-state agencies that would be involved in and play a role in post-war stabilisation and transition
7. To identify and assess in advance possible ramifications and impact / risk associated with different policy decisions and measures which might be taken by the occupation;
8. To identify possible contingency scenarios and plan for them

Pre-war planning also failed to address the critical need to:

9. **Involve the people of Iraq in post-war stabilisation, recovery and transition planning and to ensure the importance of this was properly understood across the administration and all agencies and institutions involved in post-war transition**

As a result, no effective measures were taken to engage the Iraqi population in *ownership* of post-war transition.[56] One year before the war the US State Department spent millions of dollars developing a 15-volume blue print for how Iraq might be governed after the war. This involved extensive work with Iraqi exiles and experts in post-war recovery and transition. Pre-war planning, however, was so bad organized that those responsible for administering Iraq would learn of the report in the press after their arrival in Baghdad after the war. [57]

ASSESSMENT
Failure to plan and prepare properly before the war led to wide-spread and systematic shortcomings which critically impacted post-war stabilisation, recovery and transition. Many of the factors which gave rise to the violence and war which were to engulf Iraq after the invasion could have been avoided had there been proper and adequate measures to provide security and stabilization, and effective transition to Iraqi national ownership of the process. While the conditions and context in Iraq presented obvious challenges and difficulties to enabling this, the total absence of planning and preparation to take appropriate measures prevented any opportunity of success. The scale of the failure to prepare effectively for post-war stabilisation and transition played a key factor in the violence which later escalated in Iraq and which continues —though substantially reduced— to this day.

THE MARSHALL PLAN & IRAQ:
COMPARING LESSONS IN PLANNING FOR POST-WAR RECOVERY
Numerous comparisons were made between the US role in post-war recovery in Europe after World War II and Iraq. Allawi and Hashim provide interesting comparisons:

"On the US side it would seem that none of the admirable lessons of the Marshall Plan had been taken into account. The Marshall Plan had been a culmination of a nearly two-year-long debate on the conditions of European economies and the prospects of their recovery. CPA officers who had absolutely no prior knowledge of the Iraqi economy or any meaningful experience in Iraq announced the Iraqi plan after a few weeks of back-office work. The Marshall Plan was developed after long and protracted negotiations with the beneficiaries. The Iraqi plan was entirely unilateral. The US or, more accurately, the CPA officials with some help from the Pentagon's Officer of Special Plans determined the needs, defined the areas of concern, and drove the process in record time. Iraqis looked on, some in wonder, others in indifference or incomprehension, at what the US was proposing to do in Iraq. Some Iraqis kept silent, others, such as a number of Islamists, questioned the dark motives behind the huge appropriation of requests of the supplemental budget. ... Because Iraqis had not been involved in the process, they felt complacent, and even entitled to the aid. Many in the CPA often spoke about the unappreciative Iraqis, without acknowledging that the process itself, because of their actions, was flawed at the outset."
A. Ali Allawi, The Occupation of Iraq: Winning the War, Losing the Peace, p. 251.

"Because ORHA was set up only on 20 January 2003, planning for post-war Iraq was nothing compared to the two and half years of solid and exhaustive professional work during the course of World War II to prepare for the post-war occupations of Germany and Japan. As one noted authority on post-war nation-building said in a recent study:

By May 1945, Allied occupation of German territory was complete. Within days of full, occupation, US civil affairs units sent detachment into every town, establishing security and US authority in each population center within the US sector… Much the same occurred in Japan. US forces began entering Japan just days after Emperor Hirohito surrendered, on August 15, 1945. Within weeks, General Douglas MacArthur established his command in Tokyo and began an astonishing round of reforms. He too sent troops and civil affairs officers on rounds of motorcycle diplomacy throughout the country to establish security and to explain US intentions… In both occupations, combat troops transitioned into a governance presence.[58]
S. Ahmed Hashim, *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, p. 294.

Transition: Key Lessons in Post-War Recovery and Stabilization

Transition from one regime type / system to another is difficult under any circumstances. Experiences from Eastern Europe, Spain, Latin America, South Africa and elsewhere illustrate the complexities and challenges involved. Experiences in post-war recovery *and* transition —in former Yugoslavia, Cambodia, Northern Ireland, Liberia, Mozambique, Guatemala and many other countries— show the additional difficulties to restructure state institutions, foster democratic governance and sustainable economic growth, re-establish the functioning of basic services, enable citizen participation, ensure stability, security and the rule-of-law, carry out physical reconstruction and deal with the visible and invisible impacts and effects of violence —the legacy of the war— on society. The challenge is greater where societies are deeply divided or in which there are strong competing interests for the future direction of the country and control of political power, and in which underlying root causes of conflicts have not been addressed.

In the case of Iraq these difficulties and the complexity of the situation were multiplied. [59] Iraq had experienced decades of war, internal violence (the governments before 2003 had power to controlled) and military operations, human rights violations of dissidents and opponents of the regime, highly centralized one-party rule, controlled media, and brutal international sanctions which had an extreme and debilitating effect on the country. The defining factor affecting Iraq's process of *transition*, however, was that it was managed / controlled by an external political / military presence which many Iraqis view(ed) as illegitimate. This was exacerbated by the way in which the transition process was managed.

The following section provides a summary of key lessons learned in post-war recovery, transition and peacebuilding from the Middle East, Latin America, Africa, Asia and Europe. This includes key lessons drawn from the transition experience in Iraq through interviews, publications and reports from key experts, national stakeholders, and affected communities. This is followed by assessment of post-invasion transition in Iraq and identification of key factors which contributed to breakdown and the emergence of escalated armed confrontation and sectarian violence.

> Literature on and experience of transition and post-war recovery are extensive - but insufficiently learned from. In recent years significant efforts have been placed on improving understanding and identification of key lessons. Much remains to be done to ensure these lessons are internalised by agencies and actors involved in transition processes (locally, nationally and internationally).

15 Key Lessons Identified from Post-War Recovery & Transition Experiences[60]

1. **Ensure clear and accurate identification of needs and priorities**. Post-war recovery and transition processes are challenging and complex tasks. Clear identification of priorities and assessment of needs is essential. Populations / stakeholders should feel that the issues that are priorities for them are being addressed in the transition process.

2. **Ensure Safety and Security and Prevent Outbreaks / Escalation of Violence**. In order for transition to be possible it is vital for individuals and communities to feel safe and effective measures to be taken to prevent the outbreak of violence. Establishment of legitimate, trusted authority, inclusion of all key stakeholders, and the rule of law are essential, as is deployment of effective stabilization / peacekeeping forces and engagement with local communities and stakeholders in peacemaking processes to manage, address and prevent outbreaks of violent conflicts.

3. **Establish Functioning State Institutions and Legitimate & Inclusive Political Processes to Manage Transition**. These must have the trust of all key sectors of the population. This may necessitate pro-active measures to ensure inclusion of different

groups which may have been marginalized in the past or which may be marginalized in the process of transition or change from one regime type to another. It is essential that the different parties and population groups feel their interests and future can be legitimately recognized and addressed in the political system and transition process.

4. **Ensure National Ownership & Sovereignty**. While often extremely difficult in divided societies and transition contexts, establishment of a national,   sovereign authority which owns and manages the transition process is critical In highly divided societies a brief transition process to enable the establishment of a national / sovereign government may be necessary. This requires that the population trust in the process and the institution/actor facilitating transition, understand *why* this period is needed, and see *credible* proof that culture and identity are respected and protected.

5. **Address Populations' Key Needs**. Including humanitarian and security needs of the population and protection of at risk / higher need communities. May often include women, youth, wounded/ traumatised. Paying attention to the gender-dimensions of violence and transition as well as their impact on children and youth are essential. In post-war situations, different communities may be at risk in different areas of the country. Certain sectors, such as widows, orphans, ex-combatants, experience particular needs. Functioning of basic services (sewage, waste disposal, electricity), provision for medical needs, re-establishment of law and order and economic opportunities and employment are central.

6. **Reconstruction, Economic Rehabilitation and Employment Generation**. Rebuilding destruction from the war, and ensuring jobs and employment generating measures —esp. for young men / ex-combatants— are critical to recovery and preventing recurrence of violence. Reconstruction activities should involve the local community and affected population and be designed to maximize positive economic impact for the community / country. It is extremely important that reconstruction projects be conflict-sensitive and not be perceived to benefit only supporters or to punish opponents. Special attention should be given to ensure the large sums and flows of money involved in reconstruction do not fuel corruption (either of international NGOs and contractors or of the local / national state and businesses).

7. **Effective Management of Security Sector Reform**. Including priority on maintaining security in post-war transition and ensuring effective reform or reintegration of armed forces / combatants back into the community / economy. Proper management of SSR is a key pillar of stabilization and peaceful transition.[61]

8. **Enable Citizen Engagement & Participation**. The citizens of a country can be the best vehicle, carriers and owners of change / transition and recovery after war. Special attention should be given to supporting / enabling *authentic* participation and engagement by the population in transition. This means more than participation in elections —which in and of themselves are key moments in transition processes— and should be built into all key steps and phases in transition.

9. **Protect Human Rights**. In all transition processes, protection of human rights is essential to prevent violent escalation and destabilisation. This should be done across the board. All communities / sectors of a population should feel their needs and rights are being respected and protected. Cause for perception of bias should be avoided. Protection of Human Rights across all communities and for vulnerable groups can help prevent the rise / escalation of sectarian and 'tit-for-tat' violence and persecution of vulnerable minorities or targeted communities.

10. **Address the Past**. One of the most challenging processes in post-war recovery or transition from authoritarian regimes. While there are no easy answers, it is essential that people feel their needs for addressing the past are fulfilled, and that there is accountability, without whole-scale demonization / exclusion of key sectors of the population.[62]

11. **Address Contentious / Critical Issues**. Often in transition / post-war processes there may be highly contentious / critical issues which, if not dealt with effectively, can de-

stabilize transition and lead to renewed fighting. These should be *clearly identified* and carefully handled to meet the needs and legitimate interests of all parties and prevent the flaring of violence and destabilisation.

12. **Manage Transparency & Communication**. Transition/post-war contexts can often be confusing. Populations may lack clear information on what is happening. Honest, transparent and open communication is essential, as is managing and addressing rumours.

13. **Manage Expectations**. One of the worst mistakes in post-war recovery is to falsely raise expectations or make promises which cannot be kept. This can quickly erode trust and confidence.

14. **Strengthen Conflict Handling - Peacebuilding Capabilities and Infrastructure for Peace.** Local, regional, national —to engage actors, citizens and trusted social, community and national leaders to address and handle conflicts constructively. Includes developing/ strengthening infrastructure for peace and prevention (I4P) by drawing upon traditional methods and approaches and strengthening social and state conflict handling and early warning capabilities. Focuses on rooting approaches to resolving / addressing conflicts within communities while building robust and effective state capacities for mediation and peaceful resolution and management of conflicts. Particularly important can also be strengthening conflict handling capabilities and mediation training for members of parliament and establishment of all party parliamentary groups reaching out across conflict / sectarian / party lines to strengthen focus on social inclusion, state-building and national reconciliation and prevention of armed violence.

15. **Effective Management and Coherence in Implementation**: Economic, political, stabilization, and reconstruction measures should be effectively implemented and well coordinated across sectors.

Application of Transition / Occupation in Iraq

"…the political challenges in Iraq from around 9 April 2003—when Saddam's regime fell in Baghdad and a U.S.-led post-war administration began to assert itself—resembled many of the other recent post conflict-reconstruction or nation-building efforts. Once the Baathist were ousted from power, the vacuum of political authority had somehow to be filled, and order on the streets had to be re-established. The state as an institution had to be restructured and revived. Basic services had to be restored, infrastructure repaired, and jobs created. Fighting between disparate ethnic, regional, and religious groups—many of them with well-armed militias—had to be prevented or pre-empted. The political culture of fear, distrust, brutal dominance, and blind submission had to be transformed. Political parties and civil society organizations working to represent citizen interests, rebuild communities, and educate for democracy had to be assisted, trained, and protected. A plan needed to be developed to produce a broadly representative and legitimate new government, and to write a new constitution for the future political order. And sooner or later, democratic elections would need to be held".

Larry Diamond, *Building Democracy After Conflict: Lessons from Iraq*[63]

A comprehensive assessment of the transition process in Iraq is beyond the scope of this report. A number of excellent publications should be key references for this period, including Larry Diamond's book cited above and Peter J. Munson's Iraq in Transition. This report draws on both. The following are key synopsis gleaned from (i) extensive review of available and reliable literature and publications and (ii) reports from *SfP* interviews with Iraqi and international experts, analysts, NGOs and international agencies as well as Academics from different Iraqi universities.

Any transition process needs to be understood and assessed from multiple points of view, including:

1. Its impact on, how it is experienced by, and how it engages different population sectors (eg. elderly, youth, women, men, different ethnic and religious communities and minorities); and

2. According to different fields (eg. governance and state and institution building, security sector reform, addressing the past, economic development, reconstruction, etc.).

The context of the transition in Iraq is in many ways unique; however there are key lessons which need to be drawn from it that may have impact on a wide-range of domestic and international engagements in post-war recovery and transition from authoritarian regimes. Most notably, *SfP* identified:

1. The failure of the Occupation authorities to properly plan and prepare for post-war recovery and transition;

2. The failure to develop an inclusive political system, sovereign governance, and to foster a process of national reconciliation;

3. The failure to pay proper attention to and ensure effective support for stabilization, security and the rule of law;

4. An overly sectarian approach which fuelled divisions in Iraq;

5. The failure to ensure proper management and effective implementation of the transition process, affected significantly by lack of effective coordination, ideological dogmatism, and —in many cases— poor staffing and personnel

The cumulative impact of these strategic failures were perhaps **the single most significant contributor to the outbreak of sectarian violence and what was considered by many a civil war in Iraq.** They played a defining role in the post-war chaos which affected Iraq from 2003 – 2009 and continues to affect Iraq (to a lesser degree) today. Citizens, academics, journalists, national and international organisations and agencies, IGOs and governments should engage in a more systematic review of these experiences and draw the relevant lessons from them. The aim here is simply to complement the sections above and below with a brief review of the transition process in Iraq according to the 15 key lessons in transition identified above. While the review below leaves out far more than it includes, we believe it captures many issues which played defining roles in shaping the transition experience in Iraq.

Ensure Clear and Accurate Identification of Needs and Priorities
ORHA and CPA staff were —on the whole— too inexperienced and lacked the capabilities necessary to accurately identify needs and establish appropriate priorities for post-invasion stabilisation and recovery. Responsible planning was often replaced by diktat and wishful thinking. Inter-agency/departmental rivalries, including between the Department of Defence and the State Department, were also a factor. In addition, the Occupation authorities lacked the resources and numbers to effectively cover key areas of the country. The critical importance of developing appropriate mechanisms for engagement with Iraqi stakeholders in establishing priorities and setting an agenda to guide the transition process —and indeed for Iraqi ownership of this process— was recognized by many but not accepted and not implemented by the Occupation. With the virtual collapse of state institutions in Iraq and the dismissal (and later exodus) of many key administrators, Occupation authorities would turn to the UN and World Bank to estimate costs for Iraqi reconstruction.[64] In the early post-invasion period, however, Iraq would suffer from the imposition of conflicting agendas on the country and a lack of clear and integrated planning and identification of realistic targets and priorities and how to achieve them.

Ensure Safety and Security and Prevent Outbreaks / Escalation of Violence

A factor in the immediate aftermath of the invasion was the failure to stabilize the country. CentCom ignored calls for deployment of sufficient forces and military police in several key areas under Coalition control.[65] As Larry Diamond, former senior adviser to the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) in Baghdad noted "From the very beginning, the U.S. occupation failed to earn the trust and respect of the Iraqis: First, it failed in its most important obligation as an occupying power —establishing order and public safety— and then secondly, it failed to convey early on any clear plan for post conflict transition."[66] The crisis of looting and instability which followed in the early weeks and months after the invasion would cause many Iraqis' perceptions of the Coalition to change for the worse. With the failure to restore order and critical services, disbelief at what was perceived as ineptness or deliberate mal-intent grew.[67] As Lieutenant General Peter Chiraelli, US Commander Multinational Corps Iraq, noted "People who were on the fence or supported us" in the past "have in fact decided to strike out against us."[68] According to Ahmed Hasim, "...the three-year engagement in Iraq, from the end of conventional military operations in April 2003 to the fall of 2005, reveals a remarkable ineptitude in securing peace and stability. This has been most evident in the failure of the United States to find a solution to a virulent and deadly insurgency which has claimed thousands of lives. The failures are all the more embarrassing in the light of the ambitious post-war goals the United States had in mind for Iraq."[69] As the Coalition failed (i) to establish order, (ii) to foster security, and (iii) to earn legitimacy and trust amongst the different sections of Iraq's diverse population, militias and local actors took their place. A killing spree against former regime operatives began. By the summer of 2003, this extended to include academics, teachers, bureaucrats, artists, journalists and professionals. The rise of militias, sectarian violence, and the killing or driving into exile of much of Iraq's educated and managerial class would later cause severe challenges as Iraq worked to re-establish centralized order and control. It played a major role in the sectarian violence which followed —forcing millions of people from their homes and resulting in the deaths and injury of hundreds of thousands of Iraqis.

Wide-spread looting: A serious blow to credibility and confidence

Within days of the Coalition's entry into Baghdad there was wide-spread looting and whole-sale destruction of government buildings and important national institutions, including theft of priceless cultural and historical artefacts.

> "Nearly every ministerial building was systematically stripped of its contents, and fires were ignited in the buildings, both to hide the crimes and to burn down hated symbols of the state's power. Hotels, palaces, villas of the elite, embassies, hospitals, barracks, power stations, water works, were all targeted and mostly looted, vandalized and burned down. The National Library with its priceless manuscripts collection was looted and the building set on fire. Thousands of vehicles and construction equipments were stolen and spirited off..."[70]
>
> Ali A. Allawi, *The Occupation of Iraq*

Though the Pentagon had received a list from the State Department of 50 sites for protection —including the Archaeological Museum— military forces stood by and failed to act to restore order. The ransacking of buildings and carting off of artefacts often took place within direct eyesight and in the presence of Coalition forces.[71] They had no clear instructions or rules of engagement for such situations and had received no orders to intervene.[72] "Endemic looting resulted in an estimated direct loss of $12 billion, adding greatly to the costs and timeline for reconstruction".[73] The apparent indifference of the Coalition to the destruction of Iraq's cultural legacy and infrastructure was a blow to its credibility. This stood in marked contrast to the attention given to the Ministry of Oil and Ministry of Defence which were secured upon entry to Baghdad. The failure to protect sites of national importance and cultural patrimony of world-importance would be a significant blow to public confidence and trust in the Coalition.[74]

More worrying to some than the looting of historical artefacts was the failure of Coalition forces to secure weapons depots across the country. Two cases in particular stood out:

Tuwaitha

"When U.S. troops arrived at Tuwaitha, the yellowcake was in a locked warehouse that had been secured by the IAEA before the inspectors left at the start of the war. While U.S. troops were actually at Tuwaitha, looters broke into the warehouse. They took the barrels and apparently dumped the yellowcake. Almost two tons went missing. In his 2003 State of the Union address, President Bush said Iraq's efforts to acquire yellowcake from Niger were so dangerous that they justified a war, even though the intelligence about Iraq's Niger connection was transparently fraudulent. Yet his Administration did not consider Iraq's actual stockpile of yellowcake important enough to justify ordering U.S. troops at the location to protect it." [75]

Al-Qaqaa

"In spite of these warnings, U.S. troops left the al-Qaqaa bunkers unguarded In the months that followed, looters removed the RDX, the HMX, and 5.8 metric tons of PETN, a third explosive. This was no small operation. Removing so much material would have required at least forty ten-ton trucks." [76]

Both quotes from Peter Galbraith, *The End of Iraq*

Establish Functioning State Institutions and Legitimate & Inclusive Political Processes to Manage Transition

Establishing functioning state institutions in the immediate aftermath of a war is difficult under any circumstances. More so in a country in transition from a highly authoritarian regime which had already begun to fracture, and which had experienced more than a decade of sanctions. Early missteps brought about by ineptness, poor planning, and ideological imperative had severe consequences and laid the seeds for the violence that was to engulf Iraq. Some of the most well known examples include:

CPA ORDER NUMBER 1

Order Number 1 of the CPA (issued on the 16th of May 2003) addressed the 'Disestablishment of the Ba'ath Party', barring the top four levels of Ba'ath Party leaders from public positions in the new Iraq. [77] This order was legitimately welcomed by many Shia and Kurds who saw the Ba'ath party as a hated institution of repression. Order Number 1 dismissed almost the entirety of Iraq's managerial class, at a time when the Occupation was attempting to establish 'post-war' stability. This substantially impacted the functioning of Iraqi state institutions. [78] The lack of trained personnel in key institutions and branches of government also affected efforts to carry out large-scale recovery and rebuilding. [79]

While the order itself —or at least the aim of it— was acceptable to many Iraqis (and at least equally opposed by others), the process by which it was given and implemented was highly contentious. [80] The order had been developed by a limited number of people working in the Pentagon's Office for Special Plans. There had been no serious discussions in the pre-war period or meaningful efforts to include Iraqi leaders and consult with broad sectors of the population in post-invasion Iraq. Senior officials had warned against the potential impact it would have on Iraq. The Arabic equivalent for 'De-Bathification' is a harsh word meaning '*uprooting*'. Welcomed by many Shia and Kurds it was seen to be discriminatory by many in the Sunni community. [81] The orders were implemented or carried out by a special committee headed by Ahmed al-Jalabi. Both Order Number 1 and Order Number 2 are jointly accredited by many Iraqis and internationals with having dismissed more than 2 million people from employment. Because of this unemployment reached was said to have reached 70-75% in 2003. It also increased insecurity and weakened state capability. [82] This view would intensify in later years as 'de-Bathification' was politicized (including through the 2010 elections) and not always applied in equal measure. Ramifications of the order continue to affect politics and developments in Iraq. One of its key impacts was the intensification of sectarianism in Iraqi politics. [83]

It is important to note: in transition contexts it is often critical to find ways to address serious human rights violations and abuses by former the former regime. Appropriate measures to address the legacy of the regime as a whole and to remove individuals who had played a key role in egregious human rights violations and repression under the former regime could be accepted as legitimate by broad swaths of the Iraqi population across all communities.[84] In particular, in a potentially highly divided society, particularly one in which an outside military is present, particular attention should be given to handling this issue in a way that is seen as legitimate and helps to foster healing and reconciliation, rather than further division. The manner in which De-Ba'athification was carried out, however, did not meet those criteria.

> "While the CPA estimated that the edict affected only a small percentage of Ba'ath Party members, the CIA station chief in Baghdad warned CPA proconsul Bremer that this figure consisted of some of the most well-connected and well-informed Iraqis in terms of operating the country and its infrastructure. "By nightfall, you'll have driven 30,000 to 50,000 Ba'athists underground. And in six months, you'll really regret this." The decision had already been handed down, however, and the de-Ba'athification order went ahead."[85]
>
> From Peter Munson, *Iraq in Transition*

CPA ORDER NUMBER 2

On August 23 the second CPA order was issued calling for the 'Dissolution of Entities.'[86] This included the dismissal of approximately 400.000 military personnel. "Both a former Iraqi general who became a resistance leader and U.S. Major General James Marks, head of intelligence for Coalition ground forces at the time, believe that the decision to dissolve the Iraqi army factored significantly into the propagation of the resistance."[87] With the removal of Iraqi security forces and the dramatically under-force deployment of Coalition troops, a security vacuum was created. People wanted security which neither the State nor the Coalition were able to provide. In their absence, militias grew.[88]

> The modern Iraqi army was established in 1921. Ever since it was regarded by the Iraqis as the preserver of the nation's unity, sovereignty and the crucible in which all differences were melted. It played a major role in defying the British influence in Iraq before 1958, took active role in all the Arab-Israeli wars, carried out the revolution that ended the monarchy in 1958 and foiled the Iranian attempts to occupy Iraq and dominating the area since 1982. When the Iraq-Iran war was stopped in 1988 it emerged as the biggest military institution in the region. Its power was regarded by the Israelis as a real threat and a balancing element in the face of the huge Israeli power. Hence it became a US target. In 1990, the US took the invasion of Kuwait as pretext to ally international forces to oust Iraq from Kuwait and to destroy its huge military capabilities. Although the US managed to destroy part of this power in 1991 war and through the strict sanction imposed on Iraq since 1990, the US aim to end the Iraqi military capabilities remained a primary objective of the US and Israel. It was no surprise that the second decision taken by the CPA chairman, Bremer, was to dissolve the Iraqi armed forces. Iraqi collaborators were also in favour of this decision because they feared that it may stand in the way of them coming to power in post-invasion Iraq. It is worth mentioning that no government following the occupation of Iraq, i.e. since 2004, showed any interest in re-instating the Iraqi army. What they all were speaking about was to establish a new army. In the end this new army was established on sectarian basis which only increased sectarian division and violence in Iraq. In fact the dissolving of the Iraqi army and the humiliation its members were treated with following that resulted in throwing in the streets hundreds of thousands of well trained and experienced fighting people. Thus while the armed forces in the case of Tunisia and Egypt were instrumental in keeping law and order and preserving the national unity, Iraq was deprived of this privilege immediately after the invasion.

Many within the Iraqi army had been waiting to be called upon by the Coalition authorities and the new government of Iraq to take up their role in helping to rebuild Iraq.[89] Their dismissal was a blow to their honour and dignity and left them unemployed.[90] For many Iraqis it was seen as a measure to enfeeble their country. In terms of establishing 'functioning state institutions' and 'legitimate processes to manage transition' it:

1. Removed a key pillar which could have been called upon to provide stabilization in the period of transition, creating a security vacuum which the Coalition was unable to fill;

2. Created an unemployed army of hundreds of thousands of trained military officers / combatants at a time when Iraq's economy was severely destabilized;

3. Was seen as an attack upon a key national pillar and symbol for many of Iraq's pride and dignity; [91]

4. Enabled a period of anarchy in which militias rose up to fill the space left by the army;

5. Created an enabling context in which an insurgency could develop and thrive, aided by disaffected members of the former armed forces and security forces.

Exclusion of the Sunnis

Both of Bremer's initial executive orders and the broad sweep of Coalition policy and rhetoric had the effect of demonizing and excluding Sunni Iraqis from the new Iraq. Former advisor to the CPA Larry Diamond would write "The CPA did a poor job of including Sunnis with real following in the Iraqi Governing Council and in the emerging structures of power. The CPA should have reached out from the beginning to a wider circle of Sunnis from the vitally important tribes." [92] Sunnis felt threatened and excluded.

> Adnan al-Janabi was Minister of State in the interim government of Lyad Allawi. One day he was arrested and roughly handled by US soldiers manning a checkpoint leading to the heavily guarded Green Zone, where he worked. After the event, Janabi, a Sunni, told a British journalist: '[The Americans] made every single mistake they could have thought of to alienate the Sunnis. The US is behaving as if every Sunni is a terrorist.' [93]
>
> Ahmed S. Hashim, *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*

Functioning State Administration & Civil Service

A key contributor to and result of the chaos which followed the invasion was the collapse of functioning state institutions and civil service. Deterioration had already begun before under Saddam Hussein throughout the period of two wars and sanctions, but it reached a new level under Coalition authority. It wouldn't be until 2008 / 2009 that many basic state services would begin to function again, but even then State ministries would be highly sectarian and the Iraqi state would be ranked as one of the most corrupt in the world and face demonstrations by its own population demanding improvements and better provision of services.[94]

Ensure National Ownership & Sovereignty

Exclusion of Iraqis from Governance

The United States under Jay Garner and the Office for Reconstruction and Humanitarian Aid (ORHA) initially promised a rapid hand over power to a sovereign Iraqi government.[95] Attempts were made to bring about inclusive consultations with a broad range of tribes and stakeholders. With the arrival of Paul Bremer III and the establishment of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) these plans were derailed. Executive power was to remain in the hands of an appointed US proconsul. Key decisions which would have pivotal impact on shaping Iraq were taken with no or little input or say from Iraqis.[96] If an Iraqi government

with at least a modicum of authentic inclusion of all key constituencies had been in place to address these issues, it is possible that the outcome may have been seen as more legitimate. UN representative Viera de Mello had repeatedly emphasized the need for Iraqi ownership if post-war recovery was to be successful. He was not listened to.[97]

Government of Exiles

Another key critique brought by many Iraqis was that those Iraqi leaders the US did engage with were made up primarily of exiles that were seen to have 'come in with the American tanks'. Development of a politics of 'national unity' was hamstrung both by the lack of political leaders known and accepted by the population —largely a result of the policies of the former regime which had prevented the development of political opposition and alternatives— and by the lack of trust by the population in political leadership returned from exile. As in many conflict areas, there were clear fault lines between those who had stayed in Iraq under Saddam Hussein and those who were abroad in Iran, the UK, the United States and elsewhere. Many Iraqis were critical of the lack of broader inclusion and failure to establish an authentically sovereign authority or government to oversee transition. Most exile leaders lacked acceptance across Iraq's communities and appealed to primarily sectarian constituencies.

Address Populations' Key Needs

The chaos and violence which erupted in Iraq following the invasion stunned many Iraqis and created cause for concern over the future of the country.[98] If the US had succeeded in re-establishing basic services and maintaining law and order many Iraqis would not have been so disappointed.[99] Failure to re-establish electricity and the fact that it was even worse than before the war was a major grievance. It also had a significant impact on businesses and economic activity, disrupting growth as companies were forced to work part time or to purchase expensive generators to keep operating.[100] Only in the North did things seem to steadily improve. In the rest of the country, however, disbursements for reconstruction efforts were slow, with only 12% of funds allocated for water and sanitation disbursed by March 2005.[101] High levels of unemployment and extraordinary delays and mismanagement of reconstruction added to the picture. Critical failures such as the managed collapse of the food rationing system had huge impact on the lives of millions of Iraqis.[102]

The *Iraq Living Conditions Survey 2004*[103], a three-volume report jointly produced by the UN Development Program and the Iraqi Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation, was based on a survey of more than 21,000 households in the country from April to August 2004. It showed that the Iraqi people were suffering from a widespread collapse in their living standards and conditions, exemplified by war-related injuries, chronic malnutrition, low life expectancy, declining health, declining literacy, and significant setbacks in women's rights. This is hardly a foundation for the creation of a democratic society. Electrical supply to 85 percent of houses was unreliable, 46 percent lacked access to clean water, and only 37 percent were connected to a sewage system. Nationwide…median household income was $144, down from $255.

Ahmed S. Hashim, *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*

Reconstruction, Economic Rehabilitation and Employment Generation

Together with the hundreds of thousands unemployed through CPA Orders 1 and 2, CPA's refusal to maintain state industries as they attempted to implement a neoliberal restructuring of Iraq's economy led to the loss of more than 350.000 jobs. Many farmers were also forced off their land by the US removal of agricultural subsidies in August 2003.[104] Altogether, some estimated that up to 1 – 2 million jobs were lost. Reconstruction and economic rehabilitation also progressed slowly. The CPA withheld investment in state industry and businesses in anticipation of their liquidation. A massive programme of 'shock therapy' was applied including liberalization of capital accounts, currency training and investment regulations, and ending of state subsidies. While this fit well with the US

administration's goal of transforming Iraq into a 'business friendly' market economy to attract foreign investment, national industry and export competitiveness were drastically degraded.[105] Reconstruction and economic rehabilitation proceeded slowly, or, in many cases, deteriorated even more from the pre-invasion stage.

Oil

Oil was a case in point. Oil revenues account for nearly two thirds of Iraq's GDP and for almost all export revenues.[106] They are the primary source of government revenue (accountable for between 90% to 95% of government revenue in most years). Daily production before the 2003 war stood at 2.6 million barrels a day but had fallen to 1.9 million by May 2004. By December 2005 this figure had fallen further still to 1.1 million barrels a day. The scale of the challenges involved in reconstructing Iraq's oil sector —particularly after more than a decade of deterioration under the sanctions and in the context of a growing insurgency— were significant. Iraqi oil facilities had been secured by the American military. A breakdown came, however, in the combined impact of the failure to plan effectively for the security of Iraq's oil infrastructure and corrupt management of contracts. In the years following the invasion Iraqis would witness the further deterioration of their oil industry and reduction in sales. At the very beginning of the war, the US administration had awarded $1.7 billion in mainly no-bid contracts to American companies to boost oil production.[107] This was not achieved. While by 2011 Iraq has begun to show signs of recovery in this sector —providing key revenue and income for the state— the early failure to more effectively boost oil production and assure security for oil installations contributed to instability.

Procurement

Procurement contracts were also managed in a way that harmed rather than helped Iraq's struggling economy. In the early period of the occupation the Pentagon would award contracts to foreign companies rather than to Iraqi subcontractors. Many of these contracts were given in no-bid contracting. Issues of over-pricing and failure to implement would later cause media scandals as millions of dollars could not be properly accounted for. In any situation of post-war recovery and rebuilding, procurement contracts can provide powerful stimulus for the local / national economy. Rather than integrating procurement into an economic recovery plan to increase production and employment in Iraq, Occupation authorities preferred to grant tenders to external companies. What could have been a powerful and vital source of employment for Iraqis in the immediate aftermath of the invasion became an opportunity for gainful employment for workers and companies from the US, Kuwait, Egypt and Saudi Arabia.[108] While many Iraqis were without jobs, thousands of low-skilled labourers were brought in from other countries around the world. This was often argued as a 'security necessity', but contributed to further compounding the context in which many Iraqis believed there country was being exploited by an external occupation force while they themselves remained without jobs.

Effective Management of Security Sector Reform

Peter Munson, perhaps one of the leading experts on Iraq's transition, notes that "Transition scholars advise military and security forces must be shielded from transition and, where possible, rehabilitated from their former roles. Iraqi military and security services were disbanded in the invasions aftermath and left to their own devices."[109] The dissolution of the armed forces led to the dismissal of at least 400.000 people. This happened at a time when the Occupation faced a severe lack of necessary force numbers to provide stability and security across Iraq. No 'transition' period was provided for. Dismissal of the Iraqi military both contributed to creating a large 'army of unemployed' who could become potential supporters for the insurgency, and removed a key institution of stability. Efforts to train and develop an Iraqi security force were severely impeded by weak and unrealistic planning and expectations, poor implementation, lack of effective coordination and inadequate and rushed training. There was a focus on 'numbers' of battalions rather than on their capability.[110] Facility Protection Services (FPS) received rushed three-week trainings.[111] A relatively thorough police training programme run by the US Department of Justice consisted of 10 weeks class-room instruction in Amman and no field training. This contrasts

with 5 months class-room training provided to police trainees in Kosovo and 12 weeks of field training.[112] There was a 'gap' between the realities of the scale of the problem and the inadequate measures being taken to address it. It would take years before an Iraqi force would be able to develop effective operational capacity. Even then, it would be a highly sectarian force and be seen as one of the players in the civil war affecting the country. This represented one of the greatest challenges to Security Sector Reform in Iraq. In the absence of a national government seen to be legitimate across sectarian lines, the army and security forces themselves were developed along sectarian lines.

Enable Citizen Engagement & Participation

A key focus of the Occupation after the 2003 invasion was to transform Iraq into a thriving democratic society that could provide a model for other countries in the region. Both Iraqi and international observers and analysts have noted repeatedly, however, the almost complete failure of the Occupation authorities to include Iraqis in discussing, planning and addressing the post-war recovery and transition needs of the country. Meetings and consultation processes can certainly be pointed to by supporters of the Occupation. Real authority and power, however, remained in the hands of the Occupation. US officials, soldiers, contractors and administrators often 'out ranked' Iraqi citizens, tribal authorities and political leaders. Rather than dedicating the significant time and energy required to building up ties and mechanisms for inclusion, the Occupation was based more on quick decisions taken by a small coterie of officials —often against advice received from other Departments or lower-ranking military officers in the field. The Occupation failed early on to develop effective mechanisms for inclusion, ownership and control by Iraqi citizens and their representatives. Only with the Surge would this begin to fundamentally change, providing clear evidence of how this could have been carried out earlier on and the impact it may have had on Iraqi politics. Key questions, however, remain as to how tentative steps towards inclusion of tribal leaders and representatives of the Sunni communities who had opposed external political-military presence will be sustained in the new governance structures in Iraq. Notably, the Occupation also maintained many Saddam Hussein era approaches to NGOs and civic participation more broadly. NGOs supportive of the external presence and recipients of foreign funding were often welcome to take part in consultations and 'town hall' like meetings when these did occur. NGOs, associations and voices critical or opposed to foreign presence were often marginalized and ignored. Following the Surge, more 'town hall' like processes were implemented by local level officers and units. While these were an improvement, the lack of early and inclusive engagement played a key role in the breakdown of order which followed the 2003 invasion.

Protect Human Rights

The human rights situation in Iraq following the invasion and particularly from 2004 – 2009 was horrible. Torture, killings, kidnappings, street assassinations, looting, rape, sexual violence, political liquidations, sectarian attacks, forced population displacements were all wide-spread. Several military assaults by Occupation forces, including in particular that on Fallujah, should stand to be investigated by proper international authorities. Questions remain also regarding use of weapons and munitions, including claims of wide-spread use of depleted uranium which has been cited by Iraqi and international doctors and medical organisations as having given rise to increased rates of cancer and birth deformities. Labour laws and highly repressive regulations concerning union organising were also favoured. As insecurity escalated, the rights of Iraqi citizens became increasingly vulnerable and frequently violated —both by state and non-state actors and the occupation authorities. As noted by *Searching for Peace in Iraq* author and research Sawsan Al-Assaf

"If we would like to summarize the general situation for the Iraqi people and what Human Rights that they enjoyed after 7 years of the occupation, then, we have to look at the Amnesty International report for 2009 (published Feb.2010). It stated "The humanitarian situation remained alarming. According to the UN, at least 4 million Iraqis still did not have enough food, around 40 per cent of the population did not have

access to clean drinking water, and 30 per cent did not have access to adequate health care services. The education system was near collapse with schools and universities lacking essential materials such as books, and teachers and students terrorized by violence. Many schools were bombed. The unemployment rate remained extremely high at 50 percent or even higher".[113]

This situation was somewhat different in the north of Iraq where greater stability prevailed, but even there during the period 2003 - 2008 authorities and their militias could use violent means and human rights violations against opponents. Iraq after 2003 provided little protection for minorities who became frequent targets of sectarian attacks. In southern and especially central Iraq, people's legal and civil rights were violated en masse in mass arrests and detentions. While the human rights situation in Iraq prior to 2003 was grave, it did not improve with the invasion. Despite significant improvements from the nadir of 2004 – 2007, human rights remain a key concern eight years on.

Address the Past

There is no clear answer or universal solution for how to address egregious human rights violations and atrocities carried out under former regimes. The manner in which the 'past' was dealt with in Iraq by the Occupation authorities, however, played a major role in fuelling sectarian violence and civil war in Iraq. Iraq had experienced decades of extreme violence and repression under the former regime. All Iraqis —though to differing extents— had been affected: by state repression, by the Iran-Iraq War, by the sanctions. In almost all situations of transition there are legitimate needs of the population to find out about what happened to relatives, to know the truth of what took place, why it happened, and to have those responsible held to account. Recognition of the crimes and atrocities which have taken place is essential. In the most 'stable' of transitions, dealing with the past remains extremely difficult and complex. In Iraq, however, this was handled in a way which contributed to furthering sectarian anger and divisions rather than accountability, national healing and reconciliation. Occupation authorities showed little knowledge or understanding of how to address past instances of grievous human rights violations and repression. Instead, the political and ideological way in which this extremely difficult and complex issue was handled fed into a sectarian dynamics in politics and escalating violence, rather than contributing to recovery and rebuilding of a unified Iraq. Human rights violations under Saddam Hussein were used by the Occupying authorities for political legitimisation and propaganda purposes to justify the invasion (more after the fact than before). To-date, addressing the past, including the 'new past' from 2003 to today, has not been adequately done. The visible and invisible impacts and effects of Iraq's long history of violence and authoritarian exercise of power may have lasting repercussions for generations to come.

Address Contentious / Critical Issues

There are two types of critical issues relevant to an external occupation / assistance force during a transition:

1. Those that are properly under the remit of external forces or to which they can legitimately (and are legally bound as occupying forces) contribute; and

2. Those that should be properly under the jurisdiction of a sovereign national authority.

Key critical issues that should have been addressed in the immediate post-invasion period by the Occupation authorities identified by Iraqis and international experts and analysts include:

i.   Establishing a legitimate, acceptable, credible process for transition to a sovereign Iraqi government;
ii.   Ensuring stability, security and rule of law during the transition period;
iii. Re-establishment of basic services;
iv.   Immediate post-war steps to support economic recovery and reconstruction with a particular focus on employment generation;

External actors may also support processes such as Security Sector Reform (SSR) and dealing with contentious conflict issues (eg. disputes over territory; disputes over management of national resources, processes for addressing past crimes and atrocities, etc) *if* they are seen as trusted and acting in the best interests of the country. Addressing contentious / critical issues in Iraq was affected by the same flaws and fundamental gaps that impacted upon all aspects of the transition. While extensive human and financial resources were assigned, overall lack of coordination, the political context, and escalating chaos and violence reduced impact. The failure to effectively address these critical issues early on played a driving role in reducing legitimacy and trust in the Occupying authorities. Several of these issues remain outstanding today and contribute to lasting insecurity and instability in Iraq.

Manage Transparency & Communication

Iraqi interviewees and international experts note the almost complete lack of transparency which governed the 'transition' process in Iraq. While the CPA issued a constant stream of briefings and often overly optimistic pronouncements, many if not most Iraqis had little clear information on which decisions were being taken, how decisions were being taken, by whom, and why. There was also a lack of effective communication between different agencies and organisations involved in post-war stabilization and recovery.

Manage Expectations

A critical failure of the Occupation authorities which contributed considerably to erosion of trust and legitimacy was its inability to address the gap between the promised benefits which Iraqis would experience and the daily reality they were living with. This situation was in part created by the tendency of the Occupation authorities to constantly promote their own achievements or to promise quick improvements in the living conditions of Iraqis. As the situation worsened, daily pronouncements from the CPA and their ever-widening contrast with the situation on the ground grew. The following quotes illustrate this:

"Iraqi audiences could not relate the flow of optimistic pronouncements from the CPA to the erratic and falling supply of electricity and other public services... The CPA developed attitudes and methods of working frequently ignored bad news. The obsessions with putting a positive note on all but the more dire events obstructed the development of coherent long-term plans with realistic and realizable targets." [114]

Peter. J. Munson, *Iraq in Transition*

CPA and ORHA careless promised Iraqi public much more than they could deliver. Gap between results achieved and what public had been led to expect grew ever larger over time. More jobs had been promised; higher living standard; growing level and increased quality of public services. Reiterated time and again as the natural and expected consequences of Iraq's liberation from SH's tyranny. CPA consistently failed to reach performance standards it had set for itself; Iraqis became cynical about its promises.[115]

Peter. J. Munson, *Iraq in Transition*

"The United States had committed itself to an unparalleled reconstruction effort in an unstable and dangerous environment. In sector after sector – oil, electricity, water, and sanitation – targets were often consistently missed, ignored, or changed. Iraqis continued to suffer from increasing blackouts and untreated sewage. The 'disconnect' between what the CPA publicly trumpeted and the experience of the average Iraqi was almost total. The resulting performance gap was managed by a tiresome campaign of media manipulation, insipid retelling of 'success' stories, and rigid denial of shortcomings and flaws." [116]

Ali A. Allawi, The Occupation of Iraq

"By spring of 2004, the mood in Sadr City had turned distinctly sour against the occupation. The initial high expectations that the population had had regarding the Coalition and improvements in their living standards and habitat had been unfulfilled, leaving an increasingly embittered people." [117]

Ali A. Allawi, The Occupation of Iraq

The Shia south was seething with discontent in late summer 2003. It started as anger over the manifestly poor socioeconomic conditions in the south; it quickly became political. Shia expressed considerable anger over fuel shortages and the lack of electricity in an oil-rich country. In the words of one resident of Saleh Qasr, near Basra: 'We haven't had any electricity since the war. The British promised us everything, and they have given us nothing. We were happy when the Coalition forces got rid of a big tyrant, but if they don't help us, we are all going to become like Fallujah people.' Protests over the dismal economic conditions broke out in the Shia cities of Kut, Amarah and Basra in early 2004. Many of the demonstrators were former military personnel and ordinary workers distraught at the lack of employment opportunities and the rampant corruption in the new Iraq. [118]

Ahmed S. Hashim, Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq

The gap between promised improvements and —on the whole— an ever worsening situation lost critical trust and confidence for the Occupation. Starting as it already did with a deficit in this area from many Iraqis, further erosion created by the failure to properly manage expectations —and indeed the active policy of creating unrealistic and exaggerated expectations— had a significant impact. Critics of the Occupation and those who supported resisting it could easily point to the failure to fulfil promises, while even allies and supporters had their credulity stretched by the extent of mismanagement and failure to deliver on promises.

Strengthen Conflict Handling / Peacebuilding Capabilities

Other than the projects of NGOs and non-state actors, this featured very little in the planning and administration of the Occupation authorities. The primary area for this in a divided society is in the creation of inclusive politics, legitimate state authority and political reconciliation. This is important both at the national and state/province and local levels. In the context of sectarian division which developed in Iraq this did not begin to develop until mid-way through 2007 and the rise of the Surge. Though there were extensive early calls in 2003 and 2004 by religious leaders and civil society organisations for non-sectarian politics, this was not strongly reflected at the state or political party level, or in Occupation authority policies. Still to this date state authority remains both contested and influenced by sectarian politics (see below). Iraq's tribes and religious leaders also have important roles in Iraqi society and politics in conflict mitigation and resolution. With the dominance of divisive politics in Iraq following 2003, these were not fully drawn upon or engaged with. This represented a possibly missed opportunity for transition in Iraq.

Conflict Handling and Peacebuilding Capabilities —increasingly called *Infrastructure for Peace* (I4P)— can also refer to the development of dedicated state capacities for dealing with conflicts, peacebuilding and reconciliation. These can include:

· Ministries or Departments of Peace and National Reconciliation;
· An Office or Secretariat of the President for Peacebuilding and Reconciliation;
· Ombudspersons (both at the national and local authorities levels);
· National Peace and Security Council or Committee;
· A National Peace Forum;
· All Party Parliamentary Groups —on conflict issues, peacebuilding, or national reconciliation, etc
· Human Rights Commissions;
· Early Warning and Conflict Mitigation Mechanisms

While the Iraqi government did create an Implementation and Follow-up Committee for National Reconciliation, this was seen as a highly sectarian body and was not trusted by many Iraqis. Other bodies for Human Rights and Women have also been created. While potentially important they were seen as marginal in the politics of transition. Conflict handling mechanisms have also been established with the assistance of NGOs and international actors such as UNAMI to deal with disputed territories and other conflict issues, such as federalism. The Iraqi state today, however, whether at the national or local levels, does not appear to have strong, well-established or trusted peacebuilding architecture and capabilities for dealing with conflicts effectively and supporting or facilitating national reconciliation.

Effective Management and Coherence in Implementation

The general evaluation of management and implementation in the period 2003 – 2005 in particular has largely been scathing. The Occupation faced many challenges —both resulting from its own organisation and the context in which it was implemented— several of which have been outlined above. While the *Searching for Peace* project covered copious amounts of literature and extensive information provided in interviews outlining a wide-range of gaps and challenges in management and implementation, it would take more space than available her to detail them all. Key issues identified, however, which have also been covered in part by GAO reviews of the US government and others, related to:

· Procurement Mechanisms, including faults with no-bid contracted which gave rise to massive corruption and misuses of resources;
· A 'mile-stone' and deadline-based approach which often set unrealistic targets and focused more on 'checking boxes' than achieving verifiable and authentic results;
· The mix of some highly qualified personnel with many poorly qualified personnel who were unprepared for the context and responsibilities demanded of them;
· Rapid turnover of personnel which made institutional learning and consistency particularly challenging in the early years of the war;
· Inadequate understanding and grasp of the scale of the needs, or how to operate in the Iraqi context;

Different agendas by a wide-range of organisations and agencies often gave rise to competition rather than coherence. This is a challenged faced in many post-war / transition contexts but was particularly acute in Iraq. A further challenge facing implementation was the 'long distance' approach taken both by many government, non-governmental and UN agencies, which, because of security concerns, often did not visit sites of implementation and instead contracted projects and work out to other organisations and agencies. There was also a massive flooding of the country with cash in the immediate post-occupation period at a time when there was little retention capacity to utilize it effectively. Coordination mechanisms were limited and often ineffective. This saw extensive duplication of projects or failure to coordinate where linking of efforts was essential.

Corruption was also wide-spread and endemic, both in Iraqi state institutions, much of the 'NGO' sector created after the occupation, and amongst international contractors and personnel.

PART 2

FAULT LINES

Part two of *Searching for Peace in Iraq* is made up of an analysis of key 'fault lines'.[119] Fault lines refer to key dimensions in societies / globally along which conflict issues and dynamics 'erupt'. In the same way tensions and pressures along the earth's natural fault lines can lead to earth quakes, tsunamis and the separation of continents, fault lines in our countries / societies, if not effectively addressed, can also contribute to underlying contradictions and conflict issues and dynamics which can erupt into violence.

 This is not intended as a comprehensive strategic conflict analysis but rather as a reference section for organisations working on peacebuilding. The scope of issues identified here is broader than those sometimes brought forward in conflict analysis, focusing on the larger context and key issues affecting people in Iraq which are contributing to structural dimensions of the conflict at several levels. Based upon guidance from interviews, six fault lines were prioritized:

1. Politics and Governance
2. Security
3. Economic
4. Gender
5. Generation
6. Society, Culture and Identity

Research for this section was carried out through the *SfP* interviews and then substantiated with extensive review of major publications by the Government of Iraq, national and international organisations, and UN agencies.

Today there is a superb body of materials which are available identifying key conflict issues and needs assessments in Iraq. Unfortunately, many of these are not known to those working on the ground in Iraq. This section therefore serves as a reference document and draws heavily upon relevant key publications on each topic.

Politics & Governance

Politics and governance are a central fault line in Iraq. Interviews by *SfP* researchers identified eight major fractures. These were brought forward both by Iraqi and international analysts and are supported by publications by national and international organisations and community-based conflict analysis. These include:

1. *Failure of Political Leadership and Governance to promote national unity and political reconciliation — 'Sectarianisation' of Governance and the State*. Instead of functioning to promote national unity and political reconciliation, political activity of different factions has played a leading role in fuelling sectarianism, intensifying divisions, and escalating 'zero sum' politics in Iraq.[120] Many Iraqis believe that political leadership since 2003 (and before) has played a pivotal role in fostering sectarianism and sectarian violence.[121] Particularly from 2006 on Iraq was gripped by hard sectarian animosity which brought the entire country to the verge —or reality— of civil war. The sectarianisation of state institutions in this period has a lasting effect which has still not been fully or thoroughly addressed. While the 2009 and 2010 elections were taken as showing that many Iraqis have grown tired of sectarian politics, political parties and the state have shown limited capability to develop an inclusive political process able to address the actual needs and issues facing the country and the concerns of citizens;

2. *Allocation of power and privileges to party factions which often follow sectarian lines.* This has contributed to exclusionary politics and hiring processes in Ministries, where Ministries have often been transformed into the fiefdoms of different factions.[122] From 2003 to 2008 in particular this included purging Ministries of staff with associations to other factions or from other communities (eg. Sunni), as well as de-Ba'athification. While this was often perceived and portrayed as being carried out along sectarian lines, the picture was more complex, including rivalries between parties, militias, and individuals, sometimes across sectarian lines. One effect of this has been to reduce state capacity and weaken the development of inclusive governance. Political parties have also used their control of Ministries to direct provision of services to their communities and to consolidate their power bases;

3. **Weak state capacity to perform and deliver key services to the population**. Resulting from the general chaos in Iraq following the 2003 invasion as well as the deterioration of state institutions and capacities from before, but further intensified by large scale dismissal of state employees and the gradual worsening security situation in many parts of the country. Other factors included hiring practices, absence of effective strategic planning, and poor performance capabilities. Affected state capacity to properly address security, employment generation, health, water and sanitation, electricity, protection of vulnerable groups and at risk populations, as well as management and reinvestment of resources to stimulate growth and foster sustainable economic development;[123]

4. **Failure to resolve key constitutional and political disputes**. This remains a key challenge in Iraq. Contributes to continuing vulnerability and political and economic uncertainty. Key issues include, amongst others:

   i.   Divisions over the relationship between central and local government, power sharing, and constitutional reform;

   ii. Deadlocked Hydrocarbon Law;

   iii. Security sector reform and the role of *peshmergas*;

   iv. Disagreement over the status of Kirkuk and other disputed territories —depriving citizens in these territories of access to security, rights and services;

5. **Weak Local Governance**. In many areas, local governance remains weak or non-functioning. The role of the state has frequently been supplanted by the role of local power authorities, militias and tribal structures. While the period since 2008 in particular has seen a gradual strengthening of the role of the central state in Iraq, local authorities often are seen by Iraqis as being highly corrupt and poorly performing. Strengthening

of local authorities and their ability to provide effective, transparent service delivery and governance was identified as important.

6. **Continuing Human Rights Violations**. Interviewees noted that while the general security situation has improved in Iraq and the scale of violence witnessed from 2003 – 2008 in particular has decreased, there are continuing concerns over human rights. The rights of women, children and youth, the poor and marginalized communities remain of significant concern. Given the general instability remaining in the country and the lack of a diversified economy, social and economic rights for many remain tenuous. While the large-scale ethnic cleansing seen during the height of violence has substantially decreased / ended (largely because populations are already displaced), some communities (in particular Sunni) remained concerned about the extent to which it is possible to fully realise their political and civil rights in Iraq today. Another issue raised in several interviews is the re-establishment of an increasingly authoritarian state in Iraq, and the use of police and military to target critics of the state. International analysis with long-term engagement on governance issues in Iraq highlighted this as a possible issue of concern in the coming years.

7. **Weak Capacity to Foster Civic Participation**. On the whole, there appears to be limited capacity as well as limited interest to foster or allow increased participation by citizens and citizens groups in governance and decision-making. Consultations over policy remain limited with external actors often having a greater voice than domestic Iraqi communities / sector. A culture of dialogue and inclusive governance was noted as absent by many Iraqi interviewees. Also highlighted was the weak capacity of citizens, civil society organisations and non-state actors to participate in the political arena. Some achievements, such as civil society engagement on women's rights and legislation affecting NGOs were noted. These cases also included extensive international support and engagement. The question of Iraqi civil society and citizens to actively shape government policy and ensure the needs and interests of different citizens groups are addressed was highlighted as a concern.

8. **The Role of External Interference and Influence on Iraqi Politics**. The role of external interference can —and is by many Iraqis— be seen as a key factor fuelling violence, instability, and 'intra-Iraqi' strife. External actors, including the United States, Iran, and others, have often pursued their own interests through extensive involvement and intervention in Iraqi political developments and processes. This included measures to impose laws on Iraq during the occupation authorities as well as direct funding for and support for different political party factions and military training and development. Given the history of external intervention in Iraq, many Iraqi's question the role and interest of both neighbouring countries and the US and its allies. There is, understandably, a low level of trust / confidence in external actors and the roles they play in Iraq's political development.

State

> "The occupation of Iraq has brought the country several decades backward in terms of socioeconomic development. Basic services, such as electricity, drinking water, and sanitation systems, deteriorated to an unprecedented level that was unmatched even during the period of international sanctions (1992 – 2003). Basic human and social rights, including security health, education, and work, are still inaccessible for the majority of Iraqis.
>
> The state's capacity to sustain even a minimal level of welfare benefits and economic growth for the Iraqi population has receded, despite the vast international and national resources available to successive Iraqi governments. In fact, Iraq currently ranks among the most corrupt states in the world."
>
> *Iraq's Civil Society in Perspective*, p. 22 (NCCI – APRIL 2011)

The Iraqi State Before 2003

The state in Iraq before 2003 could be characterized has having been highly authoritarian and centralized. Development of a semi-modernized state and significant provision of public services to the population were combined with systematic violence and repression against opponents.[124] What could be considered a state-capitalist regime included the creation of a large middle class that substantially transcended ethno-sectarian boundaries and opened possibilities for inclusion for Shia, Sunni, Kurds, Turkmen and others.[125] The regime portrayed itself and was seen by many of its citizens to be non-sectarian. Communities which opposed the government faced harsh repression. This included Sunni who resisted (particularly senior members of the officer corps) as well as Shia, Kurds and others. Shia and Kurdish communities in particular experienced massive brutalities and massacres which gave rise to large-scale population displacement (both internally in Iraq and as refugees abroad). Following 2003, mass graves were found in several parts of Iraq.[126] Two major wars and sanctions, however, had reduced the operational functioning and effectiveness of the state. In the years prior to the invasion, the rise of a dual power system or parallel governance and power structures —with an increased role being played by tribes and non-state institutions and religious institutions— was already in evidence. Life under sanctions had given rise to significant corruption (though this would increase beyond most people's expectations following the invasion and remains a critical drain on Iraqi governance, society and economics today). Hashim identifies three critical devices utilized by the state pre-2003 to maintain power and authority. These included[127]:

1. The use of oil revenue to develop a modern infrastructure and provide basic services to the population. Before the imposition of sanctions Iraq was a leader in the region on indicators including health, literacy, and economic development. Many Iraqis look back on this with pride and contrast it to the current state of service delivery in Iraq today. Provision of basic services to large portions of the population was a key mechanism in the states legitimacy and authority;

2. A massive coercive establishment to keep the population in line, including one of the largest armies in the region as well as a large intelligence apparatus developed for internal population control.[128]

3. Neo-patrimonialism or patronage to pay off groups to support the regime. As sanctions impacted upon the state's ability to maintain its authority across Iraq, the process of patronage and relying upon local power structures took on an increasing role. This 'decentralization' and weakening of state structures begun in the last decade of Ba'athist rule was quickly escalated following the collapse of state structures after the 2003 invasion. The process of re-centralization which began to take root effectively in 2008 saw once again wide-spread use of patronage to buy support from local power structures.

Following the first gulf war the North of Iraq attained a high-degree of independence and self-governance. Writing on the KDP and PUK Hashim notes:

> "The KDP and PUK were intolerant of political pluralism and heavily patrimonial, in that each party provided tangible benefits to those who directly supported them. Instead, inter tribal differences and deep personality clashes between leading Kurdish figures Massoud Barzani and Jalal Talabani resulted in the creation of a political system of clientelization and neopatrimonialism. This meant in effect that Barzani and Talabani gave rank, position, power and money to those who were loyal to them as individuals."[129]

Many Kurdish analysts and NGOs agree with this assessment of political dynamics in Kurdistan before 2003. At the same time, they also point out the important role played by both of these leaders in the establishment of the safe haven in northern Iraq which brought crucial stability to the region and improved social, economic and political development, safety and security.

Ba'athism and its Impact on the State and Governance in Iraq
Ba'ath party had a significant impact on the development of the state and governance in Iraq. As in many former Soviet states in Eastern Europe, party membership was a key requirement for promotion in many sectors and fields.[130] Many Iraqis today look back on this period —particularly from 1970 to 1980— as has been one of significant development, achievement, and improving of the standards and quality of life for Iraqi citizens. For many Shia and Kurds —as well as others— the period of Ba'ath control is often presented as a time of (often) brutal repression and human rights violations against their communities. A number of interviewees spoke of achievements in this period in the fields of economic development, growth of the middle class, and improvements for women and in the fields of health and education, but also noted the high level of human rights violations against opponents of the regime and use of the military and intelligence forces against civilians (including against marsh Arabs and Kurds and Shia more broadly after the 1991 uprising). According to the comparative analysis the Baath Party that came to power in 1968 was totally different from the one that ruled for nine months in 1963. It was clear that the leadership of the party had fully apprehended the lessons of 1963. Instead of fighting the communists they formed a front with them and provided the ICP with freedom of action and a daily newspaper. In 1970 it also reached a peaceful agreement with the Kurdish Democratic Party, headed by Mullah Mustafa al-Barzani, which ended the fighting in Iraqi Kurdistan and started four years of peace. These moves and policies won them the support of the Soviet Union, which signed with Iraq several economic, oil and military agreements. Most important of all was the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation which was signed by the two countries in 1972. This was the first treaty of its kind between the Soviet Union and any Arab or Middle Eastern country. A year before the signature of this treaty, Iraq nationalized its oil industry, a bold and daring move which the vast majority of experts in this field thought would lead to the downfall of the regime. The Iraqi challenge to the major oil consortiums was successful in the end, and the world started to deal with Iraq directly in that matter. The nationalization itself and its success was regarded as a major blow to the oil consortiums, and to the US and Britain in particular.[131]

Most Iraqis interviewed thus retained a nuanced memory of this period, including both achievements and severe limitations and human rights violations. Importantly: opposition to the Ba'athist regime and many of its excesses could be found across all communities. Rather than enabling a process of national reconciliation and healing after 2003, the violence of the former regime was often used in promotion of sectarian interests. To the dismay of many Iraqis, the legacy of many of the Ba'athist practices of cronyism, reward for party loyalty, and violence against opponents, in many ways continued in post-2003 Iraq. This has also been an experience in other countries in transition.

The State and Violence

Since its foundation, the State in Iraq has been an instrument and site of extensive violence —as well as a major instrument for modernisation and development of the country (in particular following the rise in oil prices in the 1970s). Historically, however, violence has played a role in the changing of regimes in Iraq, as well as in the maintenance of the state's power over its citizens.[132] A key area identified by many interviewees is the need to reduce the role of violence in Iraqi politics. This can be seen also in the calls by civil society, religious leaders, and across many political parties, for peace and calm during the delays in the formation of the government in Iraq after the 2010 elections. While frustration with the process was pronounced for many Iraqis, the fact that it did not lead to a return to large-scale violence was an important milestone. Much work remains, however, to transform the relationship between the state and its citizens and on how state power is transferred and changes of 'government' in Iraq to remove the role of violence in Iraqi politics. This includes both training and development of accountability of the armed forces and police to ensure respect for human rights and non-use of military force (both state and non-state) against civilians and opposition parties, as well as ensuring that all Iraqi citizens and communities believe their interests and identity can be protected and their needs met in Iraq.

Sectarian State

Following the 2003 invasion of Iraq sectarianism was institutionalized at every level of government and state institutions, from the cabinet down to Ministries and hiring of staff.[133] Given their previous exclusion from the highest levels of governance, many Shia felt the removal of Saddam Hussein could now enable them to take an appropriate role in government in relation to their population size. In practice, however, this lead to the large-scale exclusion of Sunnis in governance. In the predominantly Kurdish north, politics and state institutions also took on sectarian characteristics. It is interesting to note, however, as many interviewees recognized, that the government in the North has also pro-actively reached out and offered asylum and support to communities experiencing violence or being targeted in other parts of the country.

In the immediate aftermath of the invasion, leaders installed at a senior political level came mainly from former opposition parties formed principally along sectarian and ethnic lines and based predominantly in exile. Little was done to include national leadership and opponents of the Ba'athist regime from inside Iraq. Few external leaders had broad support within the country and the leaders of most factions were largely unknown in Iraq. The US approach to Iraq was framed on sectarian lines. Interviewees noted that the Iraqi Governing Council created in 2003 was formed on sectarian grounds, rather than representing the breadth of political and social-economic diversity in the country. As former CPA staffer Barbara Bodine (briefly put in charge of Baghdad) noted: "One of the first mistakes we made was to put Iraq into three neat little packages, homogeneous, monolithic." [134] As *SfP* Researcher Sawsan Al-Assaf notes:

> Following the occupation the returning expatriate Iraqis started to use a new political terminology and speech. The Shia began to speak about the unfairness of the previous regimes to them as a majority. Their complaints went back to the establishment of the new Iraqi state in 1920s. The Kurdish leaders concentrated on the tragedies they lived under the old regimes, again tracing that to the 1920s. The Turkmens and the Cheldo Assyrians complained about their marginalisation. All these new leaders, together with the US administration, spoke about Sunni domination.[135]

The UN fact finding mission report on political transition in Iraq noted in 2004 that many Ministries were purged of non-Shia employees based on 'security' and 'de-Bathification' claims.[136] Not only 'politics' but *institutions* of government became narrow and nominally ethno-sectarian.[137] Unrecognized by many observers, this also contained class dynamics as well. As Nir Rosen notes:

> The televisions in the lobby and waiting room at the Interior Ministry were tuned in to the Shiite religious channels. Shiite religious music blared from radios of police vehicles.

Shiite religious banners hung on the walls of the Interior Ministry and other ministries, while Shiite religious flags waved in the wind above the nearby Oil Ministry and other government buildings. It may have seemed harmless, but it made Sunnis feel like they did not belong and were not wanted. It was a way of letting them know that the state now belonged to sectarian Shiites. But while Shiites seemed to be firmly in control of the establishment, one group that had been marginalized by Saddam was beginning to feel similarly marginalized by the new order. The angry, poor revolutionary Shiites who found a political voice in Muqtada al-Sadr and whose influence peaked during the civil war had found that their power had started to wane after the Mahdi Army cease-fire.[138]

Interviewees noted a shift in Iraq beginning significantly in 2008 and manifested in the 2009 and 2010 elections. From this point of view, growing numbers of Iraqis appear to be becoming frustrated with sectarian politics and policies, and want to see the state and government in Iraq fulfilling their responsibilities to meet key needs of security, provision of services and economic development. This perspective should not be taken to far, however. It is important to fully and honestly assess the impact on the state system and functioning of state institutions of the sectarianism experienced from 2003 to today, and how this will affect future governance and functioning of the state in Iraq. There is not yet any unifying vision for a future Iraq. Arab and Kurdish visions of the nature of the Iraqi state remain largely un-reconciled, while substantial questions remain about the authentic capacity of the state and political parties to evolve an inclusive system which can meet the legitimate needs and interests not only of Shia, Sunni, Kurdish and other communities, but also of the different classes in Iraq, women, and youth. The willingness and interest of political leadership in Iraq to work for an inclusive vision for the future of Iraq which will transcend the sectarian dynamics of the last years should not be taken for granted. Continuing violence and centrifugal forces may still challenge Iraq's stability in 2012 and beyond.

De-Ba'athification

De-Ba'athification has been a highly contentious and divisive issue in Iraq. The process was welcomed and celebrated by many who were persecuted and victimized by the former regime, and the majority of interviewees recognized the clear need to ensure accountability for actions and crimes carried out before 2003. The sweeping nature of de-Ba'athification, and the highly politicized manner in which it has been pursued, however, was identified as one of the key factors which fuelled sectarianism in post-2003 Iraq, and contributed to exclusionary policies and politics. It also removed many key professionals and managers from positions in Iraqi state and non-state institutions (as has been discussed elsewhere). In January 2005 interviews with former Ba'athists who had turned against Saddam Hussein in the 1990s showed that many of them were willing to play a role in building a post-Ba'athist Iraq.[139] In 2011, this issue has still not been entirely resolved. Clearly political attempts to selectively ban candidates with Ba'athist backgrounds from the 2010 elections are evident examples. There is a legitimate concern amongst many Shia to not see a re-assertion by Ba'athists. At the same time, many former Ba'athists represent a legitimate current in Iraqi society and politics. In the eyes of many interviewees, the process of how to enable the crimes of the past regime to be addressed and ensuring accountability, while fostering national reconciliation and an inclusive politics for Iraq, must be given greater attention. To-date, this has not been satisfactorily addressed.

Institutional Capacity & State Performance

> "The state's capacity to sustain even a minimal level of welfare benefits and economic growth for the Iraqi population has receded, despite the vast international and national resources available to successive Iraqi governments."[140]
>
> NCCI, *Iraq's Civil Society in Perspective*

A key challenge affecting peace and stability in Iraq relates to the institutional capacity of the State and its performance in providing good governance, stability, and addressing key issues and needs of the country. Together with (i) addressing security concerns, (ii) fostering inclusive politics and (iii) addressing key constitutional and political disputes, (iv) improving the performance of state institutions and strengthening institutional capacity was identified as a key priority by both national and international experts. This is reflected in the UN Common Country Assessment of 2009 which identified key challenges affecting state performance, including[141]:

- Friction in the disputed areas in northern Iraq resulting in poor service delivery,
- extreme poverty and minimal public and private investment;
- a non-inclusive and non-transparent political system;
- weak rule of law and persistent human rights violations;
- a centralized, inefficient public sector and a bloated, under-skilled civil service;
- a decentralization process that needs to redefine roles and responsibilities at national and sub-national levels;
- corruption that affects state performance and undermines trust in the state;
- limited institutional capacity to address regional disparities, engage the most vulnerable and neglected sections of the population, and manage the demands of competing groups, including returnees;
- weak capacity to anticipate tensions linked to demographic patterns and competition for natural resources;
- poor management of external shocks and natural disasters

The UN report also identified priorities such as:

- establishing state legitimacy and accountability through an inclusive and participatory political process;
- increasing the state's capacity to exert its authority, rule by law, ensure security, and protect citizens' rights;
- strengthening state capacity to perform other core functions and to deliver services in a manner that is efficient, inclusive and responsive to the needs and expectations of citizens, including the most vulnerable groups; and
- providing women with equal opportunities and ensuring the protection of their rights is a critical challenge.

The weakness of state institutions remains a key conflict factor in Iraq and undermines citizens' trust. It can also lead citizens to turn elsewhere for provision of basic services and needs satisfaction, while hampering stabilization, development, and addressing basic needs. Poor performance by the state affects both current and long-term development opportunities for Iraq, including in health, education, and employment. The *Iraq Community-Based Conflict Assessments* identified "weak legitimate state presence (pre-dating 2003, and only slowly and recently improving) and the slow progress in delivering services, certainly affected by nation-wide violent events of the last few years, [as] what pushes people, particularly young men and others who feel excluded, towards violence."[142] Lack of trained personnel and limited institutional capability also affect that state's capacity to implement legislation and carry out large-scale projects and manage large amounts of money in a timely,

effective and accountable manner.[143] Many laws remain partially or poorly implemented as a result of weak government capacity and competition and lack of coordination and effective administration between different levels of government. Lack of political will is also frequently identified as a key obstacle affecting performance.[144] In 2008 Iraq's service ministries spent only 11 percent of their budget for that year. Since 2003, Iraq has spent only 12% of a US$17 billion investment budget allocated for reconstruction in oil, electricity and water.[145] Unless there are significant improvements in performance of state institutions, Iraq's ability to achieve the Millenium Development Goals is highly questionable.

The Iraq *Briefing Book* (2010) and international and UN experts noted recent improvements in the machinery of government and general performance issues, in particular of mid-level bureaucracy, while citing weaknesses in strategic planning which impede implementation of reforms and Iraq's development agenda.[146] Particular weaknesses were cited in "(i) government-wide priority setting and sector-specific planning; and (ii) linking policies and budgeting."[147] Despite improvements cited, however, both the *Iraq Community-Based Conflict Assessments and Searching for Peace* interviews with Iraqi organisations, experts, and representatives of different communities identified that the population more broadly remains highly dissatisfied with the performance of central and state institutions.[148] The capability and willingness of the state to address people's needs is questioned. Greater emphasis should be placed on openly informing Iraqi citizens of the challenges and difficulties facing state institutions and the need for improving state functioning and service delivery, while reaching out to include citizens and key institutions in this process. Both the Iraqi government and national and international actors should identify improving the functioning of state institutions and provision of state services as a key priority for improving stability and reducing vulnerability to violence and conflict, as well as providing for the needs of poor, marginalized and vulnerable communities. Increased attention to provision of basic services (in particular electricity, education and health) and improving job and employment opportunities are critical. Recent demonstrations in Iraq since February 2011 also attest to this.

Local Government

Several gaps remain for the implementation of effective local governance in Iraq. Interviewees noted that local authorities may often be controlled by key factions or powerful individuals and interests in their communities, and may not represent or address the needs of all communities. Political parties at the national level often co-opt or use patronage to buy the loyalty of local authorities, or may themselves directly control local authorities. Corruption and nepotism are significant challenges. Iraqi civil society organisations noted a lack of accountability and transparency in governance at the local level. All of these factors were confirmed by the *Iraq Community-Based Conflict Assessments* which also highlighted the lack of knowledge / awareness in local communities on how to influence local decision-making processes.[149] Of particular concern are areas in which local authority may be controlled by one community and the needs and interests of other communities are neglected. Ensuring proper functioning and inclusive local authorities was identified as a significant challenge in many parts of Iraq was populations are mixed.

Political Parties

Political parties have a relatively long history in Iraq and were particularly active from the 1920s to 1950s. In the decades prior to 2003, however, the development and open functioning of political parties was severely limited by the Ba'ath regime and national political movements and parties not part of the Ba'ath system were banned. Following the 2003 invasion political parties were formed largely along sectarian and sometimes class lines (particularly important for intra-Shia party distinctions). Parties largely lack broad based national support across the country.[150] The weakness of political parties in Iraq and the lack of parties developed along non-sectarian lines were identified by several interviewees as a concern for further development in Iraq. Political parties are often dominated / controlled by powerful individuals and groups within them. Nepotism and patronage are wide-spread. This has also played a role in staffing of Ministries based on party loyalty rather than professional capability. The basic elements of democratic culture and practice within many

parties are missing. The prevalence of background negotiations and deals and power-based politics threatens to promote non-transparent processes and to exclude many voices and communities from representation, and reduces trust and confidence in the political system.[151] As noted by one *SfP* researcher in relation to the 2010 elections:

> "The other important by product of the elections was the sectarian struggle inside those political parties and coalition that were part of political process, and this in turn had its effect on the Iraqi street immediately after the announcement of the elections results. The level of the violence increased in the different Iraqi cities. It seems that the Iraqi political parties participating in the election understood democracy in their own way, they understood it as a way to govern and keep their interests, if does not do that then they will reject the results. Thus, the political leaders who were supposed to spread peace, security and stability in Iraq, and because none of them had the majority he was looking for, started new conflicts (struggle) between Sunnis-Shia, Sunnis-Kurds, Kurds-Kurds and even Shia-Shia."

Political parties remain a potential vector and driver for sectarian conflict. While this is currently reduced as a result of the changing context in Iraq and the increasing frustration many Iraqis have with sectarian violence, few interviewees believed it was because of a fundamental change in the nature of political parties and the exercise of political power and competition for power in Iraq.

These findings from *Searching for Peace* interviews with Iraqi and international experts and analysts are also reflected in the *Iraq Community-Based Conflict Assessments*. The CBCA also went further to note that more attention needs to be given to "the role of politicians and political parties ... in so far as they prevent the strengthening of governance practices and the consolidation of a national and local level political reconciliation."[152] The 2010 elections saw the development of party lists with increasing focus on inclusion across sectarian lines. In the North of Iraq, the rise of the 'Change' party list also introduced a new dynamic into the elections in that area. This dynamic could represent an important potential shift that deserves support, including the encouragement of party formation and alliances reaching across sectarian / tribal lines and addressing key issues and concerns of the Iraqi electorate. Towards this end, greater attention needs to be given to both intra- and inter-party development of democratic culture and dialogue. Models such as 'All Party Groups' addressing key issues (eg. reconciliation and peacebuilding) and reaching across party lines should be supported. Interviewees also noted that the actual capability of many MPs to carry out their functions is often quite low. This includes the ability both to formulate and to enact legislation. A culture of accountability of MPs and their parties to the electorate is also very low. As another *SfP* research report noted:

> "Most of the political parties are not necessarily representing their people, so it is obvious that they cannot meet the needs of the people. Politicians need to be people from the communities, people who know their audience and come from their environment so that they can be their voice. Unfortunately, many of the political parties of Iraq are led by people who lived in exile for decades. Their culture and environment were different and it is difficult for those leaders today to understand their people's needs. Today the Leaders in Iraq are planning, deciding and putting visions for their people while they are in the Green Zone. For ordinary people, any one living in the green zone is foreigners and the foreigners do not understand Iraq problems, and needs of Iraqis. Iraqis cannot believe that those people can have the keys for peace. The 2010 elections, which were somehow fair and free according to IHEC and UN and others, reflects to the people needs and somehow the results satisfied all the parties, at least each one knew their parties capacity. However, still Shia fear from the past to be repeated, Sunni fear from the unclear future whiles the Kurds afraid from both."

Political Leaders

The general view in Iraq seems to be one of criticism and high levels of lack of confidence in political leaders across most parties. Strong conflicts exist between many political party leaders and these often feed into violence and conflicts on the ground amongst their

supporters. Sectarian statements by political leadership often impede national reconciliation and development of inclusive politics. Immediately after 2003 the Iraqi political scene was dominated by exiled political leaders who returned following the toppling of the Ba'ath regime. This frequently had a significant impact on people's knowledge of and trust in these individuals.[153] General perceptions of political leaders included frequent references to corruption and pursuit of own interests. Interviewees noted a lack of unity amongst political leadership to address key challenges facing the country. Control of political parties by political leaders and their supporters often makes it difficult for new leadership to emerge. Some interviewees noted positively that in the period following the 2010 elections and while the government was being formed, many political party leaders called for common and spoke out against a possible return to violence. Fostering of inclusive national leadership and political leaders who can reach out across communities and act to represent and address the needs and interests of all Iraqis and to earn their trust was seen as something that would be desirable, but few interviewees held high levels of confidence that this would occur in the coming years.

Parallel Governance

Even prior to the collapse of the old regime in 2003 (as a result of the US invasion) parallel power and governance structures were developing in many parts of Iraq as the Ba'athist state system had substantially deteriorated following decades of war and the imposition of sanctions. This dramatically intensified after the removal of the regime and the chaos which followed the invasion. Parallel power structures developed in nearly all towns and cities in southern and central Iraq. This was a direct response by sub-state groups to the collapse of national authority and increasing chaos and insecurity. In the absence of functioning state sub-state groups provided basic services and security, including running of schools, health clinics, and patrols to re-establish order and prevent violence. Many of these sub-state groups gained legitimacy, popularity and support for the measures they took to protect and provide for the population.[154] Sub-state actors included in different cases: local tribal and traditional authorities; political party representatives; militias (often linked with political parties); neighbourhood self-help groups; religious institutions. The role of the Iraqi Islamic Party in Mosul provides a good example:

> "The IIP emerged openly in Mosul very soon after the downfall of the regime and pursued charity work in the city, opening free health clinics, mounting patrols in neighbourhoods to discourage looting, and distributing donations to the needy and to hospitals. It quickly gained adherents among the city's professional class, doctors, lawyers and engineers. It also opened hundreds of branch offices in various locations."[155]

The same phenomenon could be found in Baghdad and across southern Iraq as different parties and factions filled in the vacuum created by the collapse of the Iraqi state —a phenomenon significantly escalated and triggered by Orders 1 and 2 of the CPA and the policies of the occupying authority. In the immediate post-invasion period these structures remained largely undetected or poorly understood by many in the Occupation.[156] As the new order installed by the occupation was contested and following measures which directly fuelled insecurity or failed to re-establish security and order in Iraq, local resistance groups also increased in number. As violence escalated in Iraq many of these sub-state actors became increasingly sectarian (though it is important to note that they were often not so in the beginning, where they were more a response to the complete failure of the Occupation powers to establish stability and security and to maintain some semblance of a functioning state and system of order in Iraq). As the central state gradually re-established itself (particularly following the rise in oil revenues in 2008 and with the military surge in 2007/2008), competition between the central state and local power structures intensified.[157] This was addressed primarily through co-optation and inclusion of these power (such as through the Awakening Movement), or through armed confrontation and violence. It is important to note however: governance in Iraq is still contested. Many of these local authorities do not fully trust or have confidence in the central state. The ability of the state to provide for basic services still remains in doubt. The failure to also properly include many local authorities and power structures and those they represent could fuel future

discontent. While this may not lead to further large-scale violence, it does hamper inclusion. Importantly: special attention should be given to how to *positively involve* local authorities and power-structures in the rebuilding and development of Iraq, and to ensure that they feel part of the future Iraq.

Tribal Structures

Tribal structures are a key part of the social system in Iraq and have played an important governance and political role in many periods through Iraq's history, including today. Tribes provide many social services essential for survival and unavailable from the state in Iraq. These include the "equivalent of life insurance, unemployment coverage, health coverage, dispute resolution, protection against attack, and even banking services."[158] During the 1970s as Iraq developed the state actively sought to marginalize and reduce the role of tribes. However, in 1980 during the war with Iran, and even more so following the imposition of sanctions on Iraq and the weakening of the state's ability to exercise effective authority, tribal structures were increasingly called upon and became de-facto 'components' or complimentary (but to a significant degree still autonomous/independent) structures to the state system. In 1996, the former regime in Iraq, formalized the revival of tribal laws established during the British mandate period.

> "Sheikhs became intermediaries between the government and the tribes, with the authority to handle matters of local law and order and mediate disputes between tribes. Some tribes went so far under this arrangement as to standardize "blood money" paid for violent crimes and murders. Sheikhs were responsible for tax collection and were also given control of a portion of the government's development budget to spend on local initiatives in their area. These roles provided tribes with revenue and rising power within the state." [159]

NCCI in their review of *Iraq's Civil Society in Perspective* note that the role of tribal leaders / structures in mediating between communities and between communities and authorities, and helping to resolve local level disputes, is often particularly appreciated. There are also times, however, where tribal (as well as religious) leaders have contributed to escalating violence / sectarianism through their discourses.[160] The role of tribal structures and leaders in post-2003 Iraq became critical as tribal structures were called upon to provide security and protection for their members. Many incidents —from loss of social, economic and political status to violations of tribal values and religious principles by occupation authorities, and real and perceived affronts to national honour and dignity— also led to tribal structures providing key support for the resistance and insurgency against the occupation authorities.[161] The split between tribes and Al Qaeda as Al Qaeda increasingly condemned tribal traditions for being un-Islamic and actively sought to undermine and usurp tribal authority, and the increasing frustration of many tribes and peoples of Iraq with the ever escalating sectarian violence and targeting and deaths of civilians, played a key role in the stabilization of Iraq as tribal leaders and members turned on Al Qaeda and re-established stability and authority in their areas.[162] Interviewees noted that in areas where there are strong local leaders and tribal authority, incidents of violence today appear lower. This is also, however, often the result that other identity groups have already been removed from these areas.

Tribal structures remain an important aspect of Iraqi politics and governance. In the context of instability and poor delivery of services by the state, tribal structures continue to play a key livelihood security and protection role for many Iraqis. *While many international donors and agencies direct their attentions to engagement with Iraqi state structures and NGOs, any process for national stabilization and reconciliation should also pro-actively engage with and include Iraqi tribal structures as key actors in this regard.* They remain a potential force for stabilization and reconciliation, and tribal leadership could play important roles in mitigating and preventing further violence. At the same time, tribal structures may also contribute to and are often key parties in local disputes and conflicts. Many Iraqi organizations also questioned the role and influence of traditional/conservative tribal leaders, mores and structures on such issues as women's and human rights. Rather than attempting to marginalize or exclude tribal structures or to see them as reactionary or conservative, however, their engagement

as legitimate actors in Iraq should be respected, and pro-active measures should be taken to involve them in addressing these issues.

Civil Society

Interviewees spoke of a difficult context for civil society organizations in Iraq. In the context of the interviews, 'civil society' as a term was used primarily to refer to non-governmental and community-based organizations. While NCCI's *Iraq's Civil Society in Perspective* notes a long history for civil society organizations in Iraq when focusing also on traditional forms of social structure and social support networks, it has been and remains a contentious arena. In addition to NGOs, key civil society actors in Iraq include religious foundations, trade unions and professional associations. The focus of *SfP* interviews sought to ascertain an understanding of the role and relationship of the civil society sector in politics and governance in Iraq. It should be noted that there are a wide range of divergent opinions relating to civil society in Iraq, from strongly positive to strongly critical. It is fair to say that there is no general consensus and the range of opinions varies significantly. Roughly, however, it is possible to identify three main sets of opinions, illustrated in the list below. These refer primarily to 'non-governmental organisations'.

Views on Civil Society (Non-Governmental Organisations) in Iraq in Relation to Politics and Governance

- **View 1: Civil Society as a Key Force for Democratisation and Good Governance**
  Civil Society Organisations are key, legitimate actors representing important sectors, interests and issues and lobbying for positive, democratic change in Iraq. They are an important part of democratisation and enabling the voices of citizens to be heard. They play a 'watch dog' role on the government but also act in many areas where the government is unable or unwilling to. Many civil society leaders and workers are seen as highly dedicated, committed, and honest people working for the betterment of their society. Quite a few interviewees (from civil society themselves) said they prefer to work in this sector than in government because it enables them to make a greater difference in people's lives. Civil society organizations have been active in addressing key issues, working with vulnerable communities, and addressing needs not taken up by the government.

  This view was a significant minority view, primarily held by civil society actors as well as international organisations and UN staff. When queried, however, many interviewees from other sectors, including those highly critical of NGOs, recognized some legitimacy to it. They noted, however, that this was true of a minority of organizations.

  The following two 'views' were those most frequently expressed when assessing civil society (NGOs) in relation to politics and governance in Iraq:

- **View 2: Civil Society as an Appendage of Factions and Parties in Iraq**
  Many interviewees noted that political parties and factions often create civil society 'fronts'. These exist to extend their influence amongst supporters, while also working to address real needs of their constituencies. These can range from humanitarian organisations to social services (including health and education), etc. From a critical view point interviewees raised concern that these organisations —representing a majority of civil society active in Iraq— are not authentically independent. It was noted that they are often highly sectarian, only serving people from single-identity communities. They have also served as vehicles enabling parties / factions to secure funding that they would not otherwise have access to (though in many cases, particularly those of religious endowments, funding is received more from the parties themselves and from their supporters, and not from external donors). These organizations remain outside the state system but can play key roles in providing for people's needs. This strengthens the legitimacy and relationship with the party / faction they represent.

This view was held by a wide range of interviewees when asked about the relationship of political parties and NGOs/CSOs/CBOs. Interestingly, however, analysis as to whether this was positive or negative varied. While many international organisations and Iraqis working for NGOs were critical of the role these organizations played, others spoke of them as —at times— having higher degrees of legitimacy than those dependent on external / foreign funding. It should be noted, however, that even here a distinction was made between those authentically providing valued services to their communities and those which were seen as corrupt or working only in the interests of political parties / leaders. From the point of view of civil society and governance, however, it is worthwhile to note that these organisations provide a relationship between political parties and the population —to some extent bypassing the services of the state. A critical view point also noted the role these organizations have at times played in fuelling / maintaining sectarianism. This, however, also reflects the reality that they may not identify with an agenda of reaching out across sectarian lines or building a 'non' or 'trans'-sectarian inclusive Iraq.

- **View 3: NGOs are Vehicles for Foreign Intervention and not legitimately 'Iraqi'**
  This is one of the most wide spread views which can be found regarding NGOs in Iraq. One Iraqi NGO worker suggested that this view is particularly prevalent amongst those who have not had direct experience with NGOs and the work they are doing, and is a result of propaganda against NGOs by a range of actors. The basic elements of this view are not unusual to Iraq and can be found in many countries (though this does not necessarily make them any less legitimate). They include two main lines of thinking:

  - NGOs are vehicles for those who work with them to make money;
  - NGOs agendas are set by the interests of donors and foreign countries and not by the people of Iraq or the communities they should be serving;

Given the context and experience in Iraq after the 2003 invasion there is good reason for this view widely held amongst many Iraqis. While a significant number of NGO workers were and are highly dedicated and saw NGOs as a vehicle and opportunity to work for their country / people and address issues they feel are important, they mass flooding of the country with donor funds that were extremely poorly administered, and the interests of donors to 'check boxes' for projects they were doing rather than develop serious, good quality and rigorously evaluated and well implemented projects fuelled a chaotic situation in which money could (and did) disappear to less than worthy organisations and initiatives / swindles. The phenomenon of 'briefcase' NGOs found in many countries was particularly rampant in Iraq.[163] The reduction in funding noted by interviewees from roughly 2007 onwards seems to have had an effect on this, with the number of both national and international organisations decreasing. Several interviewees said that those that remain are amongst the more serious and capable ones.

This view was widely held by many in Iraq and also by many internationals. As has been mentioned above, however, both did also note important exceptions of some highly dedicated and capable organizations. The importance of this view in relation to governance, however, addresses the key aspect of the *legitimacy* of NGOs as actors engaging with issues related to politics and governance in Iraq. The view that many of these organisations are oriented more towards external interests / donors than the needs of their communities/country, and that they are vehicles for personal profit, *delegitimizes* them in the eyes of many Iraqis. For NGOs / civil society to play a positive role in Iraq, greater efforts must be made towards accountability, ensuring good practice, and directing attention to improving relations with communities, addressing public perceptions and actively addressing issues of key concern to people.

More recently, civil society organisations have also been increasingly active in supporting civic activism demanding improvements by the government on service delivery and tackling of corruption. In addition to NGOs, unions and professional associations have

played key roles here, together with religious organisations and some political parties. Since 2006 civil society organisations have also begun to play a more notable role in lobbying and advocacy to address legislation and government performance. It was noted by many interviewees, however, that most civil society organisations remain notably weak in this regard, though some have built up impressive capacity and are highly professional.

Civil society organisations are a potentially important actor in Iraq as a vector enabling citizens and interest groups / communities to have their needs and issues raised. Currently, however, there appears to be limited interest amongst most political parties, political leadership and state structures to engage with civil society organizations. This includes NGOs as well as professional associations and trade unions. While the legislative framework for NGOs has recently changed, the approach of the state to unions and workers associations and bodies remains highly questionable.[164] As in many countries, they are seen more as a nuisance and a threat to be avoided / repressed, rather than a legitimate actor to engage with (except in those cases where civil society organisations are used as an extension / vehicle of party or factional interests). Many civil society workers noted that the government appeared more interested to listen when international organisations were also involved, and that they had a lack of access on their own. As interviewees noted tendencies towards increasing authoritarianism in Iraq, this may become a greater challenge in the future.

Citizens' Participation

"State accountability in Iraq depends on the degree of actual and perceived participation of citizens in decision-making and shaping governance. Iraq's citizens (regardless of age, sex, disability, religious or ethnic background) have traditionally been unable to participate adequately in decision-making. Civil society is weak, with limited awareness among citizens about rights and duties. Ensuring that citizens participate in the state rebuilding process is critical for stability, peace and long-term devel¬opment. It is also necessary to stem the growing sense of exclusion, particularly among women and youth, which in some instances can lead to tensions and violence."[165]

Iraq Common Country Analysis 2009 (CCA Framework)

"Overall, the lack of mechanisms for effective participation hinders the ability of citizens to claim their rights and goes against the principles underpinning the Millenium Development Goals. Women and youth face specific challenges to participating in and benefiting from wider social, political and economic life."[166]

Iraq: Monitoring the Situation of Children and Women - Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2006, Final Report

"...still limited (real or perceived) participation in political and decision making processes at the local level and weak local institutions with unclear mandates and scarce resources and capacities seem to contribute to creating a sense of frustration among great part of the population. This, combined with other factors, could spark violence and undermine a national project of reconciliation and development."[167]

Iraq Community-Based Conflict Assessments: A Synthesis, June 2009

While these quotes are taken from reports published between 5 to 2 years ago, they reflect the feed-back and comments brought forward in *SfP* interviews. The context in Iraq was seen as generally limiting / challenging for citizens participation. Factors given included:

- Lack of clear mechanisms for citizens' participation;
- Lack of clear understanding by citizens' of opportunities and rights for participation;
- The general context and atmosphere of state repression / authoritarianism;
- A highly volatile security context in Iraq over the past years;
- A history of restrictive legislation limiting citizens' opportunities for participation;
- A history of state repression and human rights violations against critics
- A severe crisis of confidence amongst citizens in the state

It was also noted, however, that Iraq has had a history of highly politically active and engaged citizenry, particularly from the 1930s on with the development of active political parties, civic associations and mass unions. Many Iraqis were highly critical of the western presentation of Iraqis as "dependent" and "helpless" people needing aid —and noted that westerners with these perceptions often had little or no knowledge of Iraq's culture, society and history and frequently didn't speak Arabic, Kurdish or other languages of Iraq's population groups. At the same time, however, it was broadly noted that traditionally 'civic' engagement before 2003 was channelled through state supported bodies and associations, or religious bodies and institutions, which remained one of the few spaces available for at least some form of independence and opposition to the regime. Post-2003, a wide range of initiatives for increasing civic and citizens' participation have been seen. This ranges from:

- Mobilization of population groups / sectors for pursuit / achievement of their interests;
- Public awareness activities and campaigns to increase citizens' engagement;
- Participatory approaches to community development, stabilization and reconciliation

The first category includes initiatives such as public demonstrations or mobilizing communities for legislative change. Public demonstrations, both pre- and post-2003, have often been met with armed violence and strong state repression (from early demonstrations by dismissed soldiers and officers to the demonstrations in the spring of 2011). Organisations dealing with gender and women's issues have also sought to mobilize women to context legislation in Iraq —though greater focus was often placed upon organising and mobilizing international support than direct engagement with women in Iraq. Public awareness campaigns have been carried out to mobilize citizens for participation in elections, as well as to restrain violence. Religious authorities and civil society organisations in particular have played key roles here. Participatory approaches —directly engaging citizens in addressing issues affecting them— have primarily taken place at the local level and around community development issues. These projects, predominantly at a 'micro' level, give citizens direct experience in participation and help to empower them for addressing issues affecting their lives and communities. While interviewees saw little evidence of this *directly* contributing to increased participation at the social or political level, the potential for this was identified.

It is also important to note the largely non-violent, mass participation by citizens in the elections in Iraq, in particular in 2009 and 2010. Citizens' activism in the spring of 2011 in demonstrating for improved governance, service delivery, and ending corruption, also showed the potential for civic and citizens' participation. Particularly in the context of Iraq where efforts for national reconciliation and peacebuilding have been noticeably absent at the political level, many interviewees noted a strong potential / opportunity to engage citizens, civic organisations, professional associations, and religious bodies and tribes, to foster 'bottom-up' participation in reconciliation and peacebuilding.

The State and Human Rights
For 2010 and 2011 the Freedom House *Freedom in the World* index ranked Iraq as amongst the 'not free' countries.[168] Interviewees cited wide-spread and extensive, on-going human rights violations or human rights issues including[169]:

- arrest, torture and killing of civilians by occupation, government and militia forces
- repeated attacks on civilians by armed groups
- attacks on women and women's organisations, domestic violence and abuse, trafficking of women for sexual exploitation, forced prostitution and female genital mutilation[170]
- assassination, arrests and attacks on journalists and media institutions
- governmental restrictions on media and freedom of expression
- authorities crack-down and repression against freedom of assembly (particularly following the spring 2011 demonstrations)
- persecution of and violent attacks against ethnic and religious minorities

- wide-spread use of torture and brutal / abusive conditions in prisons including whipping, beating, sexual molestation and sodomization of detainees with sticks, pistol barrels and other instruments, pulling out of teeth and fingernails, electric shocks, asphyxiation and sleep deprivation
- mass population displacement contributing to high rates of insecurity and violation of social and political rights

Of particular concern many interviewees noted the apparent absence of government plans or prioritization to address and act upon these issues. It was also noted by many that human rights abuses which continue in Iraq cannot be solely or principally attributed to the context and situation of sectarian-based armed violence in the country. Increasing government and state authoritarianism and a return by the state to authoritarian roots were seen as a key factor.[171] Human rights violations contribute to creating / continuing a context of instability, fear and insecurity for significant portions of Iraq's population and are a direct barrier to stabilization and national reconciliation. The context of human rights violations in the country directly affects civic participation and citizens abilities to participate in politics and governance freely, actively and without fear of persecution and repression. Based upon *SfP* interviews with both Iraqi and international experts and analysts, there are grounds for concern that the legacy of human rights violations and repression of civic participation remains strong in Iraq.

Political Reconciliation

Given all of these factors, interviewees remained sceptical of the potential for political reconciliation in Iraq *if significant efforts and steps in this direction are not taken and proactively encouraged by all stakeholders and parties*.[172] The relative decline in violence in Iraq following the surge and turning of tribal leaders and Sunni militias against Al Qaeda offered hope for possible political reconciliation. Instead, and despite the 2010 elections, the Shiite-dominated government has further strengthened its control and co-opted or attempted to marginalize opponents.[173]

At the same time, there can be seen to be gradual but increasing desire on the part of many citizens to return to a state of stability and an increasing focus on delivery by the state of good governance and basic services. This would require a shift from a politics of sectarianism and authoritarianism to responsible and inclusive governance addressing the needs of the Iraqi people. Positive steps were cited in relation to the electoral lists for the 2009 and 2010 elections, which were seen to indicate recognition by the political class that many Iraqis are tired of sectarian division.[174] Interviewees also noted and identified instances of political parties cooperating across sectarian lines for addressing legislative and other issues. There appears, however, to be no well thought through, concerted or substantial effort —formally or informally, officially or behind the scenes— to address or foster national or political reconciliation in Iraq. Given the extreme experience and legacy of violence in Iraq both pre- and post-2003, a political culture strongly rooted in authoritarianism and political exclusionism, and Iraq's rich but often fragmented social, cultural and religious diversity, the challenge for political and national reconciliation is substantial.

Elections

"…the January 2009 provincial election results showed that Iraqis were tiring of the overtly sectarian parties: they repudiated incumbents throughout the country, punishing them for their failure to perform. The results signalled that the civil war was over. People felt secure enough to look for new representatives and to begin to demand the provision of services and proper governance. The January 2009 votes by Arab and other non-Kurdish Iraqis were in favour of a strong centralized government that was not openly sectarian. In 2009 explicitly sectarian and religious parties were rejected, but Shiites still voted for Shiite parties and Sunnis voted for Sunni parties, and it seemed Iraq's elections had crystallized internal differences, entrenching sectarianism."[175]

Nir Rosen, *Aftermath*

The Iraqi population participated in the second election for a national government on the 7th of March 2010. The central positive aspect of this election was the big turnout. According to official statistics, 62% of those who had the right to vote used that right. The negative aspects were numerous. There was the violence that preceded and accompanied the elections, including the liquidation of some candidates, the barring of a significant number of others on the pretext that they were Ba'athists, the huge demonstrations that overwhelmed some cities, like Baghdad and Basra, demanding the evacuation of all old members of the Ba'ath party from these cities, and the interference of the pro-government militia to force people to vote for certain lists.[176]

If we go more depth in analysing the political arena in Iraq after the new elections of March 2010 we will find new coalition's strategies built on more (secular) basis, such as Iyad Allawi's. Allawi, who presents himself as a secular Shia leader, lost the last elections in 2005 and had a limited role to play in Iraqi politics of the previous four years. The role of his list was to criticize the parliament and the government. He changed his tactic in the 2010 elections in order to come with a stronger list. He included some Sunni active groups, such as Salih al-Mutlaq list, The Council for National Dialogue, (who was barred from participating in the elections by the De-Baathification Committee), and the Islamic Party headed by Tariq al-Hashimi, who was a member of the Sunni group (al-Tawafok in 2005) during the last elections. The three of them participated in the elections as members of one list called al-Iraqia list. According to interviews, this new coalition did not represent a strong popular movement or political movement to go beyond sectarianism. Rather, it reflected the aim of its leaders to gain an electoral victory. It partially achieved this by winning 91 seats, the largest number of any list.[177]

On the other side some Shia personalities, who always presented themselves as secular, such as Ahmad al-Chalabi, leader of the Iraq National Congress, who also lost the 2005 elections, joined the Shia Iraqi National Alliance list (al-Itilaf al-Watani al-Iraqi) headed by Ammar al-Hakim, which won 70-75 seats in the 2010 elections. Nouri al-Maliki, the leading member of al-Dawa party, was part of the Iraqi United Coalition, headed by Al-Hakeem in 2005. However, in the 2010 elections Al-Maliki changed from the Iraqi National Coalition. After becoming Prime Minster the al-Dawa party was split into three factions. In the same time some differences appeared between Al-Maliki and al-Hakeem. This encouraged al-Maliki to create his own list, the Coalition of the State of Law (Etilaf Dawalat al-qanon). This list was successful in earlier local elections. In preparing for the 2010 elections al-Maliki gathered thirty five political entities in his list. Al-Maliki list won 89 seats. The result was not accepted by the party and re-count of votes was requested, hoping that a greater vote for his list would change the results of the elections.[178] In the end, following the elections voters witnessed what at the time was the longest period of any country between elections and the formation of the government. While this period led to increasing frustration, scepticism and loss of confidence in the political class, political parties and political leadership, it is important to note that it did not see a return to the levels of violence and sectarian strife that many Iraqis and international observers feared.

The major shift or change which was very obvious in the 2010 elections and some analysts and observers considered as a very important change in the current situation of Iraq was the big Sunni participation in the elections.[179] As a result of that, the Sunni participation in the elections principally supported the al-Iraqia list led by a Shiite leader. While this list included most of the active Sunni leaders and personalities, this meant that the Sunnis were giving their votes to a (secular) Shiite leader, Ayad Allawi, who had the backing of the US.[180]

Elections in the North
The specific dynamics across Iraq very significantly by governorate and region and population groups. The following is an extract from a *SfP* report written shortly after the 2010 elections on the elections in Northern Iraq:

"Kurds in Kurdistan Regional Government KRG had different type of tension and intra-conflict during the period between the two elections 2005 and 2010. Almost all the Kurds were

supportive to the two main political parties KDP and PUK during 2005 election, and were happy to vote for KDP leader Masud al Barzani to be the president of KRG. Both parties entered the competition as one list in 2005 parliament election, jointly nominated Jalal al Talabani as a president of Iraq. Because of the general circumstances for 2005 election, it was expected that Kurds will have that power to gain this position. Kurds thought that by gaining these two positions, the Kurds economic situation will be improved as well as the pending issues with the central government will be solved especially the disputed areas and applying the article 140. Since 2005 and until the 2010 election, people in Kurdistan didn't see any significant progress toward solving the pending issues with the central government nor any improvement for their economic situation, despite of many investment and development in the infrastructure projects were achieved in some parts of Kurdistan, especially in Erbil, but, this unfair balance in the infrastructure development between PUK controlled areas, Sulaimaniyh Governorate, and the other KDP controlled areas represented by Erbil and Dohuk Governorates made people aspire for more transparency by PUK to improve the current situation and the supporters of PUK parties feel that there is no attention to their demands. Today, the two main parties, which have dominated Iraqi Kurdish politics for the last two decades, are being challenged by a new grouping called Change List, which is campaigning for transparency and reform. The new grouping, Change List, founded by former PUK deputy leader Nawshirwan Mustafa, has emerged as a strong contender. Mr. Mustafa, who runs a media company, resigned from his PUK post in December 2006, reportedly over disagreements on party reforms, 30 years after co-founding it. Over the past few years, the public, especially in Sulaimaniyah Governorate, has often complained about corruption, cronyism and the two parties' control over the market, a position often reflected in reports by local and international organizations on human rights, freedom of expression and transparency in the region.[181] In July 2009 KRG parliament election, Gorran list (list of change) was able to gain substantial amount of votes that would have otherwise gone mainly to PUK or maybe KDP. It was clear that the PUK have been losing a lot of support and votes from their home ground. Those people who thought would never like any other parties or organizations besides PUK, but from everything they have seen in Sulaimanya, things were not going very good. The main Kurdish political parties often speak about their main achievements in KRG. KRG leaders refer to the two airports in Sulaimaniya and Erbil that were built and are improving year by year. They forgot the reality that the average citizen of Kurdistan probably never travels via these airports because of their economic situation, and the priority for those people is only the essential services. Today, people in Kurdistan are very interested in knowing how the Change list would change things since they have some seats in parliament of Kurdistan and In Iraq".

Assessment of Elections in Iraq

Assessment of the implications of elections in Iraq varies significantly. Many analysts, both Iraqi and international, see elections as a significant step forward for the country. Critical analysts raise concerns about the role of external countries and interference in Iraqi elections, whether through support for particular parties or direct interference in the electoral process (before and after the elections). Many Iraqi citizens, however, see the elections as an important mechanism for ensuring sovereign Iraqi control of Iraq's politics and future. While substantial numbers of Sunni abstained from participation in the 2005 elections, the 2009 and 2010 elections had high electoral turnout from all of Iraq's populations, showing recognition of the importance of participation to ensure representation. Elections in Iraq are still marred by high levels of violence, though the violence before, during and following the 2010 elections was not as severe as some had feared it might have been —particularly in the context of how long it took to form the new government. Voting, however, is still predominantly carried out along sectarian lines. Iraqi electoral bodies —including the Electoral Commission— which are meant to be independent are still seen as being highly politicized. Irregularities are wide-spread. The system for voter-registration is seen as poor and unreliable. Many people were not registered and thus were not able to vote.

Both Iraqi and international experts noted that the reports of electoral observation missions and their recommendations seem to be shelved and not rigorously pursued either by the Iraqi government or by international donors and partners. One senior international expert with close engagement in Iraq raised a note of concern regarding increasing authoritarianism in Iraq's governance and whether future elections will be authentically open, free and fair.

External Interference / Engagement

External interference in Iraq is significant and is seen as a major driver of instability and conflict in Iraq by many Iraqis. In particular the United States and Iran were cited repeatedly in interviews and publications as the two countries with the most extensive external interference. This ranges from intervention in electoral and political processes to direct training and financial support for different parties to training and supplying of security, military or various armed forces and factions in Iraq. Internal and external actors allied or closer to one side or another often criticize the 'external interference' of others: for example the United States often criticizes Iran for its external interference in Iraq, while Iran often levels the same charge at the United States. There was a strong consensus amongst all Iraqis interviewed for the need for reduced external intervention and interference in Iraq's politics, and for respecting Iraq's sovereignty.

National Vision: The Future of Iraq

The future of Iraq is still unclear. There is not, as of yet, a single shared vision for the country, or for how to meet / address all the needs of its different populations. The violence and brutality both of the last several years and the last decades have taken their impact on Iraq's people and their identification of themselves as 'Iraqi'. Inter- and intra-sectarian divisions are pronounced, while politics in Iraq, to date, has not shown itself capable of responsibly engaging with the aspirations, hopes and needs of the Iraqi people. The creation of the National Development Plan is an important step outlining concrete measures to improve services and economic development in the country. Key political issues, however, still remain unresolved. While Iraqis are tired of war and sectarian violence, a clear vision of what *peace* would look like in Iraq has not yet arisen.

On Federalism

The future nature of the Iraqi state has been one of the central issues in conflict in Iraq. *SfP* Iraqi researchers have pointed to a range of positions and perspectives on Federalism. The following are three extracts from research reports submitted by them:

"When the structure of the Federalism was announced as part of the Iraqi Constitution of 2005, different interpretations arose from the opposition parties such as the Arab Sunni's and Turkmen. Iraq's Arab leaders feared that Kurdish demands for a federation masked a quest for full independence.[182] Turkey, Iran and Syria played a significant role to delay implementing the Federal System. These countries also fear Federalism will encourage their Kurdish minorities to demand similar autonomy. Furthermore, they do not want to live next to a democratic country when their own ordinary people from their different ethnic groups are under authoritarian rule.[183] Iraq has adopted a federal model as a way to bring together a religiously and ethnically diverse country marred by deep and complex divisions. The idea of Federalism was acceptable by the Shia, Sunni's and Kurds, but the problem was the details.[184] Iraqi society and the Kurdish people are in a more developed condition and have more capabilities and awareness than the era in which the Federalism was implemented in many other countries including the United States and Switzerland as well as in Germany and Arabic tribes in the Arabian Gulf. Furthermore, the tension among Iraq's different ethnic and religious groups is no stronger or more volatile than tensions that existed at one time or another in many of those countries. Sometimes tensions have even erupted into violence at various times in India and Spain."

"On the other hand, Sunni's expressed concerns that allowing Federalism may lead to the creation of an autonomous Shia area in southern Iraq - like the Kurdish north, but under Iran's influence. The Sunnis also feared greater autonomy for the Kurdish north and Shia south may compromise their share of revenues from those oil- rich regions. If a Federal region was established in the Shia-dominated areas of the south, then this would likely include the nine governorates that also contain southern Iraq's vast oil fields. That region, coupled with the Kurdish region in the north, would leave Sunni Arabs with the potential to form a region in the governorates of Al-Anbar, Ninawah, Salah Al-Din, and Diyala - none of which are known to have any substantial oil reserves. Also, the Islamic Party of Sunni Arabs has always suspected that Israel and the United States are behind the idea of Federalism and that they would like nothing better than to create a more divided Arab nation. Therefore, within the Islamic Party, Federalism is viewed as a Kurdish mechanism by which their secession will be achieved."

"Sunni people expressed their fears of federal system for many reason; firstly: they believed that the federal system in the constitution will split the state into many regions and will turn it from one state to three states which is really something strange in the whole political history of Iraq. Secondly, we have to note that not only the Sunni people rejected the federal system but there are other groups from Shia as well as the Turkman rejected the idea because they shared the same fears with the Sunnis. Meanwhile, not all the Sunni parties and leaders rejected the federal idea. The Islamic party was the only political party who approved the constitution in 2005 which legitimate federalism as an Iraqi political system. Thirdly, the Sunni people expressed that the Iraqi society is a mixed one between all the elements. In one family you could find Sunni, Shia, Kurd, Turkman. Add to that there is not a pure province for one sect except in the north of Iraq, but still not as 100% pure.[185] … The Iraq study group report, (known as the Baker-Hamilton report) which was based on the field work inside Iraq, refers to the idea of dividing Iraq into three states as a very dangerous one for the security of Iraq and will only intensify the struggle between the different communities, it stated:

the costs associated with devolving Iraq into three semiautonomous regions with loose central control would be too high. Because Iraq's population is not neatly separated, regional boundaries cannot be easily drawn. All eighteen Iraqi provinces have mixed populations, as do Baghdad and most other major cities in Iraq. A rapid devolution could result in mass population movements, collapse of the Iraqi security forces, strengthening of militias, ethnic cleansing, destabilization of neighbouring states, or attempts by neighbouring states to dominate Iraqi regions. Iraqis, particularly Sunni Arabs, told us that such a division would confirm wider fears across the Arab world that the United States invaded Iraq to weaken a strong Arab state."[186]

SfP interviews identified that many Iraqi and international experts see the implementation of federalism both as a potential source of long-term stability and as a potential source of destabilization and strife. There appears to be no consensus or broadly shared understanding and view of federalism. There are also different needs and interests which impact how different communities relate to federalism. *SfP* analysis would indicate that any moves towards federalism – if that is to be pursued – should include extensive dialogue, confidence building and inclusive discussion so that no people are sections in Iraq feel threatened, marginalized or excluded. A process of moving towards federalism should proactively engage with the concerns as well as the aspirations of Iraq's people and include a strong confidence and peace-building component.

Security

"More than 650,000 "excess Iraqi deaths" resulting from conflict.[187] Growing insecurity and incremental failure of the state have already combined to push some 4 million people outside Iraq. At least 1.8 million have been displaced inside Iraq according to UNHCR estimates. The World Food Program's (WFP) most recent reckoning of food security, conducted in May, 2006 —just as inter-communal violence was escalating— estimated that over 4 million Iraqis were already food insecure and an additional 8.3 million, or nearly 32% of Iraq's population, were at risk of food insecurity if not provided with a daily ration under the Public Distribution System.[188] Neither the government nor the political parties pay a serious attention to those people."

SfP Research Report

The security situation in Iraq deteriorated dramatically following the 2003 invasion as a result of the invasion, the dismantling of the Iraqi armed and security forces, the security vacuum which ensued, and conflict dynamics and occupation policies which directly contributed to the escalation of sectarian violence.[189] While levels of violence have significantly declined, when asked to identify continuing issues of concern in the country, all Iraqi and international interviewees in the *SfP* project cited 'security'. Together with 'political agreement / reconciliation and addressing contentious issues (eg. federalism, petro-carbon laws, etc.)', 'economic improvement and jobs' and 'provision of services', security figures consistently as one of the most pressing issues for many Iraqis.[190] Improvement in the security situation and in the capacity of Iraqi security forces to protect citizens are perceived as immediate priorities both by international agencies (including the UN) and much of the Iraqi public. Opinion on the role of the security forces was mixed amongst many respondents. Some noted improved confidence in the security forces while others saw them as still highly sectarian and serving the interests of particular factions. Providing longer-term security and reducing / ending incidents of armed violence in the country is seen as requiring measures to address underlying causes of conflict and critical issues in dispute which have still not been resolved: including the future nature of the state in Iraq, resolution of the status of disputed territories, and addressing the legacy and impact of the last several years of violence on the country. Security Sector Reform also remains a continuing issue and challenge.

Yet while the focus of most Iraqis and international experts is primarily directed towards 'physical' security in the context of armed violence, and resolving highly contentious issues such as those around disputed areas, other forms of security in Iraq are also critical. An expanded concept of security, drawing upon work done in the field of human security and the report of the UN Secretary General **In Larger Freedom: Towards Security, Development and Human Rights for All** provides a useful context for any individual or agency seeking to support or promote long-term sustainable peace, good governance and development in Iraq.[191] Here, security is conceived of in the context of three 'freedoms':

1.   Freedom from Want
2.   Freedom from Fear
3.   Freedom to live in Dignity

Taken together they form an important basis for efforts to strengthen stability and meet the legitimate interests and needs of all of Iraq's people. This perspective raises attention to the situation of vulnerable communities, including IDPs and refugees, women, children, and religious minorities, as well as issues including poverty, food insecurity, and health. Both prior to and post-2003, significant portions of Iraq's population did not enjoy all of these three freedoms / securities. While the situation regarding health and food security was certainly better than they were post-2003 invasion, many Iraqis note the high level of insecurity and human rights violations which took place under the former regime. As Peter J. Munson and many interviewees noted:

Under Saddam's rule, security services penetrated Iraqi society and reigned supreme through a combination of informant networks and ruthless physical intimidation and

violence. Any competitor for power, whether real or imagined, was dispatched with brutal efficiency. Evidence of the breadth of this campaign of violence is still being uncovered. By the end of 2005, investigators had unearthed 286 mass graves from Saddam's era. In Hilla alone, a southern Shia town, fifteen thousand victims of the regime had been buried around the city.[192]

The issue of security in Iraq is therefore complex and multi-faceted, but essential to securing long-term peace and stability. Protection of the human rights of all citizens should be key to this. Addressing the factors of insecurity for Iraqis, including in particular vulnerable communities, strengthening the rule of law, and addressing security sector reform were identified by interviewees in the *SfP* project as essential.

Visible and Invisible Impact of Violence
The impact of nearly three decades of war and sanctions and the violence which has afflicted Iraq since 2003 has been severe. From the context of 'freedom from want', 'freedom from fear' and 'freedom to live in dignity', it has directly affected all three. Several interviewees suggested that given the focus on ending / suppressing violence and on strengthening state institutions in Iraq, insufficient attention has been given to identifying the visible and invisible (and short, medium and long-term) impacts and effects of the violence on Iraq. Interviewees cited the need to identify impact at several levels, including: broad societal impact, group relations, individual / personal, cultural, economic, political development and communities' concept and sense of self and national / shared identity. As noted by UNICEF: "Continual violence has destroyed institutions and systems of physical, social and legal protection in most parts of the country." [193] Social capital and trust between communities has been severely affected. Interviewees have spoken of the psychological impacts of living in a context of high insecurity, where many if not all Iraqis have had someone they know or love directly affected (injured, killed, arrested, tortured, beaten, driven out of their homes, driven out of the country, raped, threatened, kidnapped, blackmailed, etc.) or been directly affected themselves. The indiscriminate and uncertain nature of the violence in Iraq from 2003 on also affected many people's sense of security. Added to this is the particularly high number of Iraqis who have combat / direct war experience, either in the Iran-Iraq War, the First or Second Gulf Wars, or the post-2003 violence which has affected the country. The lasting impact of traumatic stress incurred as combatants has yet to be fully understood in the context of Iraq.

Studies amongst Iraqi refugees have indicated an increase in neurological and nervous systems disorders —a direct result of experiencing extreme shock and trauma.[194] When asked, experts addressing trauma or dealing with women, children and youth, and combatants/ex-combatants in Iraq spoke of visible and psychological impacts of the violence. This includes both *direct impacts* —where the person has directly experienced, been affected by or taken part in violence— and *indirect impacts* —where people have seen people they love or simply witnessed other human beings being beaten, killed, tortured, raped. That much of the violence has been carried out at a *social* level (by different militias, sometimes made up of former neighbours, colleagues or friends), by state forces (including military, security, and militias of different ministries), and by *external forces* (US and occupation forces), has also impacted people's sense of trust, confidence, and perceptions of *threat* from 'the other'.

The violence —together with the overall context of insecurity which has accompanied it— has also had impacts at several other levels, from economic (destruction of infrastructure, capital flight, reduced job market) to health (increased infant/child and maternal mortality due to deterioration and collapse of the health system).

Deaths resulting from armed violence, monthly casualty rates & declining/ rising violence
While there is significant dispute over the exact number of casualties, many experts agree that at least 650,000 "excess Iraqi deaths" have resulted from the armed conflict following the 2003 invasion.[195] Since 2008 / 2009 international audiences have received reports of reductions in violence and killings in Iraq. A common figure cited is that security incidents have fallen between 84 – 90% since August 2007.[196]

Is important to note that the main effects from the security situation is the violence struggle which was between 2003 and 2007 the sectarian division and the quota system was restricted to the Government, but following the Samara explosions in 2006 this division was transferred to the people and to the different Iraqi communities which led to a sectarian war and killing. It should be noted that the US role in the sectarian killings following these explosions was negative as they did not interfere to stop these killings. It is believed that this role was a strategy and a tactic followed by the US administration to divert the problem from US problem to an Iraqi internal problem. The only US solution to the sectarian violence was segregating the different mixed communities by concrete walls. As a result Iraq witnessed for the first time the phenomenon of internal refugees.

<u>Number of daily insurgent attacks in Iraq by province, February 2005 – Present</u>[197]
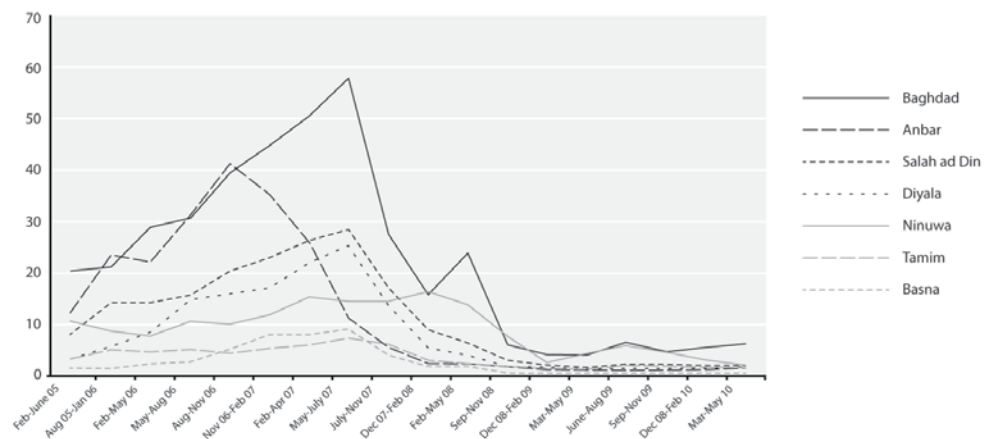
NOTE ON CHART: The seven provinces depicted account for roughly 95% of the recorded attacks nationwide over the entire period. Data not available for June-August 2008. Starting June 2009, data sources were combined, which caused an increase in the number of reported attacks.

December 2010 was recorded as having the lowest death rate since the beginning of the war (151) following the 2003 invasion, though this rose again to 250 Iraqis dying from attacks by January 2011.[198] Interviewees noted marked improvements in security since the worst period of the war in 2004 – 2007. Targeted killings, bomb blasts, and other attacks, however, continue to contribute to a context of insecurity in those areas most affected. While violence before, during and after the elections in Iraq did not reach levels some people had feared, interviewees noted a general increase in number of attacks in early 2011. This is corroborated by the AKE GROUP. In monitoring the situation in Iraq from December 2010 to June 2011 they note a steady increase in the number of weekly attacks[199]:

<u>Weekly attacks in Iraq - the last 6 months</u>
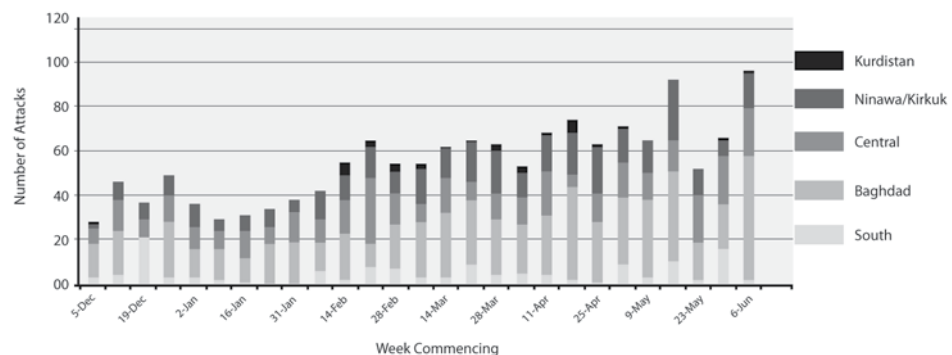
Localized Violence

As the *Iraqi Partners Forum: Briefing Book* noted in December 2010, it is important to look beyond overall national averages to identify localized areas at greater risk of violence and what they term 'concentrations of insecurity'. Outbreaks of violence in these areas demonstrate the fragility of the overall process of stabilization in Iraq. Despite significant improvements, Iraq still experiences a high number of monthly casualties. The majority of those killed are civilians. While the northern Kurdistan Region of Iraq has witnessed continuing improvements in stability and economic development on the whole, the governorates of Diyala, Ninawa, Kirkuk and Baghdad have experienced higher rates of violence.[200]

Radicalized Violence

Interviewees noted that many of the major sectarian groups have shifted their focus from armed struggle to the political arena. This was particularly visible in the 2010 elections. At the same time, smaller 'radical' organisations have continued to use violence and stage armed attacks and bombings. As noted by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre "Consequently, violence has become less predictable and remains a central obstacle to the development of a stable Iraq."[201]

Targeting (Religious) Minorities

Attacks and targeting of religious minorities, particularly around disputed areas and in Baghdad, was also cited by interviewees as a continuing security concern. Violence against minorities has emerged in different periods, for example against the Sabian then against the Yazidis in Mosul, as well as against the Shabak and finally against Christians in different parts of Iraq. What appeared to be an escalation of attacks and targeted campaign against churches and Christians was noted in several interviews. This caused particular concern amongst Iraq's Christian community. In areas of conflict between Kurds, Arabs and Turkmen there is also significant low-level, simmering tensions and violence and potential for further escalation.

Security Forces & Security Sector Reform

Historically, security forces in Iraq have frequently played major roles in internal human rights violations and suppression of dissent. During the civil war in Iraq the security forces were seen as largely sectarian and contributing to the violence. As strengthening of the security forces become a key pillar of stabilization in Iraq, this raises important questions and concerns. The following quotes highlight key issues:

> "The deep-seated ethno-sectarian divisions that fracture a society will be reflected by the local security forces in their daily interactions with the society that they are supposed to serve and protect without bias. Torture and abuse have become routine procedures among Iraqi security forces. Robert Perito, an expert on post-conflict security at the US Institute of Peace, said: 'in the long run, with the assistance of the US military unfortunately … [we are creating] a security force which is very much like the old Saddam security forces. That's not what we set out to do.'"[202]

> Ahmed S. Hashim, *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*

> "Adding up all the men employed by the Interior Ministry, the Defence Ministry, the other security branches, the Awakening militiamen, and others working for private security companies that contracted with the American departments of State or Defence, there were more than a million Iraqi men in the security sector. This was more than Saddam had."[203]

> Nir Rosen, *Aftermath*

Despite the remarkable improvement in security, absolute levels of violence remain high by any measure... The Sons of Iraq, local groups paid by the United States to keep vigil over their neighbourhoods, are in the process of being transferred to Iraqi government control. Although the fate of roughly 100,000 Sons, many of whom are former insurgents, is unclear, most will likely be cashiered back into unemployment in the coming months.[204]

Peter J. Munson, *Iraq in Transition*

The US forces have already left the big cities and are preparing to withdraw the bulk of the forces in 2011 according the SOFA agreement, leaving the security issue to the already inefficient and divided Iraqi forces. Thus, what Iraq needs is a strong central government and well trained security and armed forces to replace sectarian militias. It is also important to mention that the Ministry of Defence and Interior Ministry are still without ministers since the formation of the Iraqi government in Dec.2010.

SfP Iraqi Researcher

Strengthening of security forces was identified as a priority by the majority of international experts working with the UN and / or involved in governance and state and institution building in Iraq. This has received extensive international attention. How it is to be achieved, however, is somewhat contentious. Drawdown and withdrawal of US military forces is set to take place throughout 2011. At the same time, senior US military officials forecast that it will be at least five more years before Iraq's military and security forces are "self-reliant".[205] A number of interviewees, however, were highly critical of the idea of US forces (even trainers) remaining longer in the country past 2011. Opposition to coalition forces in Iraq averages above 70% for both Shia and Sunni populations, and up to 90% among Sunni.[206] Most analysts, however, expect that this will be the case, and several interviewees offered the perspective that this may be critical to support the development of Iraq's security forces.

Of key concern, however, remains the highly sectarian nature of many of Iraq's military and police forces. This coincides with large numbers of armed militias who participated in the violence between 2003 – 2011 and who have not yet been integrated into security forces. While many of these people may also be integrated into civilian life, weapons are either retained or easily available and can be a force for future instability. The lack of jobs and alternative employment remains a concern for many. Integration of *Sahwa* or 'Sons of Iraq' has also proceeded slowly, as shown by this Brookings report:

<u>Number and current status of Sons of Iraq (SOI) in Iraq</u>[207]

BROAD FIGURES		
Number of SOI...	**Sep '09**	**Dec '10**
Remaining in Program	83,575	54,179
Percentage Transitioned	N/A	42%
# to Iraqi Security Forces	4,565	8,748
# to Non-Security Employment	7,310	30,476

AS OF: END 2010

Interviews with members and leaders of *Sahwa* by Nir Rosen showed that many remained sceptical of the future of Iraq. Some even spoke of the possibility for renewed Shia-Sunni violence once 'terrorists' and the US had been removed from the country.[208] Failure to properly integrate *Sahwa* forces into security forces or to enable viable alternatives and income opportunities, could lead to future risk.

In part because of these factors, a key focus is being placed by UNAMI and others on addressing critical contentious issues which may serve as 'sparks' for further violence. At another level, community-development workers identified the importance of engaging

with tribal leaders and communities to resolve disputes at localized, community levels to prevent them from escalating further into violence. *SfP* interviews recognized that a *multi-tiered* or *multi-track* approach to security, one that engages civilian and non-military aspects and political resolution of disputes and not just military and security responses, is critical in Iraq. The possibility of US forces remaining —in whichever form— past 2011 could serve as a lightning rod for further violence. While strengthening Iraqi security forces and the rule of law is essential, this needs to go together with:

- improving opportunities for representation and participation at the political level;
- political solutions to disputed / contentious issues;
- strengthening peacemaking, peacebuilding and peacekeeping at the community level through engagement of civilian capacities and tribal structures and dispute resolution mechanisms;
- DDR & SSR programmes

To highlight this, in interviews with militias and combatants and former-combatants in Iraq, Nir Rosen was told:

> "We have very deep wounds. Let me tell you something, if you see all these fighters, every one of them has lost his brother, his uncle or his father, most of the guys have lost members of their families." [209]

Proper processes to engage with those who have been /are combatants and to see how to effectively demobilize and integrate them into civilian life or security forces, is essential.

Security: A broader perspective

Iraq today is ranked 153 in the world in terms of life-expectancy, below Cambodia, Haiti and North Korea.[210] Life expectancy at birth is 58 years, down from 65 years in 1987, and ten years less than the regional (67.5) and world (68) averages.[211] While deaths directly resulting from the violence and war in Iraq have played a role, the indirect impact brought about by the collapse of Iraq's health care system and poor overall quality of services —part of the impact of the sanctions and three decades of war— is a major factor. Iraq is ranked as the third least healthy country in the Arab world. Iraqis have a 19.4% chance of not surviving past 40 years of age. Only Sudan (26.1%) and Djibouti (28.6%) ranked lower.[212] According to the WHO and UNICEF, Iraq is the only country in its immediate region (made up of Egypt, the Gulf States, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Turkey) to have seen a decline in access to safe sources of drinking water from 1990 to 2006).[213] Following 1990 Iraq has also seen an increase in its maternal mortality rate and under-5 mortality rates. The Maternal Mortality Ratio is estimated at 84 per 100.000.[214] This compares with 41 in Jordan and 65 in Syria. Under-5 Mortality Rate is 41 per 1,000 live births.[215] According to UNICEF, 23 percent of Iraq's population is living on less than $2.2 a day (Iraq's poverty line). This is identified as a "root cause for widespread malnutrition amongst children and women), with one in three children under 5 either moderately or severely stunted.[216] Other human development indicators, however, have improved recently, including, in particular, that for food security. While 22 percent of the population is vulnerable to food insecurity, only 3 percent suffers from food insecurity directly.[217]

Insecurity Spreads in Iraq: Emerging Patterns of Violence in August 2010

"According to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), one in four Iraqis does not have access to safe drinking water as of 2010. Additionally, it is estimated that 80% of discharged sewage is untreated due to frequent power outages that debilitate pumping stations and sewage treatment plants. It is estimated that hundreds of thousands have left their homes in Iraqi Kurdistan (KRG) because of water shortages. During the US-led invasion in 2003, water systems were damaged or destroyed by various parties... The Iraqi Ministry of Water Resources describes the water shortage in Iraq as «critical»"

NCCI Op-Eds [218]

The violence in Iraq together with the sanctions before it directly contributed to the collapse in Iraq's health and social services, and has significantly impacted on the country's economy. This has affected the general overall *human security* of the population. The collapse in Iraq's living standards, the return of diseases once thought vanquished, and the imposition of external authority on Iraq have also all affected many Iraqi's sense of dignity. These factors, together with security issues from armed attacks and *direct* violence, are important to consider when addressing the issue of security in Iraq and working for sustainable peace and development in the country.

Refugees and Internally Displaced

"The government has proven unable to provide access to basic services to internally displaced people (IDPs), most of whom are either single women, children or elderly people."[219]

IRAQ: Political wrangling leaves around 2.8 million
Displaced Iraqis with no durable solutions in sight

"The great majority of IDPs are either women, children or elderly people (IOM, May 2009). Displaced female heads of household, households headed by older people, widows, divorced people, women without male relatives, and orphans are acutely vulnerable (UNHCR, December 2009). Vulnerable Iraqis have been trafficked for sexual exploitation and forced labour (UNHCR, 14 June 2010)."[220]

IRAQ: Political wrangling leaves around 2.8 million
displaced Iraqis with no durable solutions in sight

Refugees and IDPs are amongst the most vulnerable groups in Iraq today. The total 'Population of Concern' as identified by UNHCR in 2011 includes more than 1.5 million IDPs and approximately 1.8 million refugees (see table below).[221] Since February 2006 alone, however, more than 1.6 million Iraqis have been internally displaced within their country.[222] In their assessment of displacement following Samara (2006 – 2009), the IOM noted that displacement has placed increased "vulnerability" and strained the resources of host communities. Return and reintegration have been minimal. As of 2009 fewer than 25% of the total displaced had returned.[223] In those places returns are occurring conflicts have been identified as the capacity of cities and poor communities to cope is stretched.[224] According to the Brookings Institute "Since 2008, nearly 100.000 refugees have returned to Iraq out of the 2 million who fled since the invasion. A survey in late 2010 indicated that 87 percent of returnees could not make enough money to support their families and 61 percent regretted coming back."[225] According to *SfP* interviews, both the government and political parties have failed to develop appropriate responses or to dedicate serious attention to the issue.

<u>Voluntary return of iraqi Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees since Jan. 2009</u>[226]
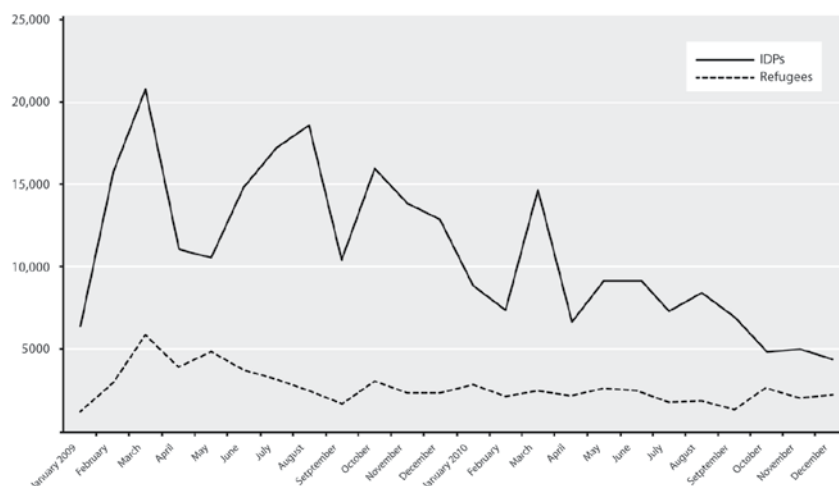
The UN 2009 Common Country Assessment for Iraq noted:

"Addressing the displacement problem and fostering the conditions that will allow displaced persons to return home will depend not only on security but also greatly on conditions affecting the communities to which they seek to return —including economic factors, better governance, the justice system and human rights situation, and access to basic services and housing. As displaced families tend to feel well received by host communities and safe in their current residences.[227] Families may delay a decision to return to their areas of origin unless they are assured of their safety and economic viability. Without jobs, services and the restoration of the rule of law and legal protection, many displaced persons may continue to count on external aid or temporary measures."[228]

Refugees and Internally Displaced[229]

Residing in Iraq [1]	
Refugees [2]	35,218
Asylum Seekers [3]	3,800
Returned Refugees [4]	38,037
Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) [5]	1,522,003
Returned IDPs [6]	167,740
Stateless Persons [7]	230,000
Various [8]	0
Originating from Iraq [1]	
Refugees [2]	1,785,212
Asylum Seekers [3]	22,383
Returned Refugees [4]	38,037
Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) [5]	1,522,003
Returned IDPs [6]	167,740
Various [8]	0
Total Population of Concern	3,565,765

Internally Displaced Persons in Iraq[230] (Since April 2003)

2003	400,000
2004	800,000
2005	1,200,000
2006	2,000,000
2007	2,740,000
2008	2,770,000
2009	2,764,000
2010*	2,700,000

*As of march
NOTE: Numbers are cumulative, but DO NOT include those displaced prior to March 2003 (approximately 1 million).

Factors Affecting the Decline in Violence in Iraq

Internationally the decline in violence in Iraq is often attributed to the 'success' of the US military surge. Interviews with both Iraqi and international experts and extensive research on the actual factors affecting the decline in violence point to a more nuanced picture. The surge —and the change in policies it represented— was an important element. Other factors were critical. Understanding the factors which led to a reduction in violence (rather than simplistic or partial explanations given for political and ideological reasons) is important if we are to understand what policies can effectively sustain and improve security and stability going forward. Three points stand out:

i.   Not all the factors which contributed to a reduction in violence are 'positive'. Some of them included the fact that many of the goals of the violence —such as ethnic cleansing or revenge killings— had already been achieved;

ii.   While ending violence is essential to building peace, it is critical that the two not be confused. Ending violence is important. Building and consolidation of sustainable peace, however, involves:

    a.   Effectively resolving underlying causes of conflict and disputed issues;

    b.   Addressing the impact of the violence and polarization, including through local and national reconciliation and healing;

    c.   Insuring an inclusive political, economic, social and 'rights' system in which all communities feel represented and their legitimate needs met;

    d.   Consolidating and sustaining factors which prevent return to violence and strengthen stability, including improving economic performance, functioning of state services, and an inclusive political-democratic system

iii. Unless meaningful alternatives to violence are provided for people to achieve their key needs and concerns, the potential for violence to return remains

The following outlines factors identified in the course of *SfP* research as having played important contributing roles to the reduction of violence in Iraq. More research and engagement with Iraqi stakeholders should be carried out to fully understand this, and to make visible the combination of factors which contributed to reduction of violence in Iraq. The reduction of violence itself could be seen as the result of the *cumulative impact* of these factors.[231]

Iraqis reject sectarian violence
Even before the beginning of the surge critical dynamics were developing which played a key role in reducing violence in Iraq. Prime amongst these was the increasing rejection by Iraqis themselves of sectarian violence. This involved several dimensions:

A. Iraqi Religious Leaders Speak out Against Sectarianism
From as early as March/April 2003 senior Iraqi religious leaders spoke out against sectarian violence and encouraged all Iraqis to refrain from violence. Significant sectarianism was already evident by early 2004, and escalated dramatically following the attack on the al-Askariyya Shrine in Samarra in February 2006. Throughout this period, however, while extensive focus has been given to the role played by religious leaders in fuelling / supporting / sustaining violence, many —at all levels— were also active in cautioning against sectarianism and calling for an end to sectarian killings. This leadership by religious leaders from across all communities was cited by Iraqis as important, though often vastly under-recognized.

B. Rejection of Sectarian Violence by Iraqi Resistance
In its early period significant efforts were made to ensure that the resistance to the

occupation would remain non-sectarian, and indeed alliances were built across sectarian lines. The main principles of the Iraqi national resistance —both Sunni and Shia— identified in many of their publications and statements were "liberation from the occupation; regain sovereignty and freedom; establish a strong national government and preserve unity between the Iraqi state and people."[232] As sectarian violence escalated it often spiralled out of control. Inter- (and sometimes intra-)sectarian killings increased. Many groups in the resistance were caught up in 'protecting' their community from others, and in retaliation and revenge killings. At the same time, many Iraqi nationalists involved in or supporting the resistance became increasingly opposed to violence which took a high toll in civilian lives. In February of 2005 the Association of Muslim Scholars (AMS) which strongly opposed US occupation of Iraq, issued a statement calling for an end to ethno-sectarian violence and in favour of nationalism and legal equality. While AMS supported the right to armed resistance to occupation, they spoke out strongly against "terrorism that targets innocent Iraqis and the establishments and institutions for the public good, and the targeting of places of workshop to include mosques, *husseiniyas* [Shia religious centers], churches and all holy places."[233] In April 2007, nine insurgent groups announced the formation of the 'Office for Coordination of the National and Islamic Resistance' and issued a statement in which they denounced sectarian violence.[234] This opened the way for a realignment of many insurgent groups against Al Qaeda.

C. Tribal Rejection of Al Qaeda and Establishment of the Sahwa / 'Awakening' Movement

As Al Qaeda increasingly condemned tribal traditions and tried to usurp traditional authority, local communities increasingly turned against it. Tribesmen who had been part of the insurgency formed local defence forces to combat Al Qaeda. Increasing disgust at sectarian violence was combined with rejection of the view of religion being imposed by Al Qaeda and their attempts to wrest authority from traditional structures (brought to a head with the declaration by Al Qaeda of the Islamic State of Iraq in late 2006). In late 2006 the al-Anbar Salvation Council was formed, in part to drive Al Qaeda out of Anbar province. In April of the same year the Iraqi Awakening (*Sahwa*) party was established. Even before the beginning of the Surge, tribal and Sunni rejection of Al Qaeda was becoming apparent.

D. Iraqi Youth, Educated and People Reject Sectarian Violence

As the killings continued, broad swaths of Iraq's population became increasingly disillusioned with sectarianism. Youth who were being encouraged to join militias in 2004 – 2006 became increasingly sceptical of the effect they were having on the community. Academics and intellectuals frequently decried the violence consuming the country (while often maintaining undercurrents of many of the sectarian perspective feeding it, they broadly rejected the sectarianism which appeared to be consuming the country). While many might still support the same goals —safety for their community, removal of the occupation— there were increasing calls to end the killing of Iraqis by Iraqis, and by external forces in the country. Attendance at Friday prayers where religious leaders supported sectarianism were reported to have dropped significantly in many areas. People were becoming increasingly sceptical of those who led them into violence. This manifested itself also in the 2009 and 2010 elections where many people voted for parties which were seen as being less sectarian.

Success of sectarian cleansing

A major contributor to the reduction in violence in Iraq is that in many areas, particularly in Baghdad, the sectarian cleansing —forced displacement and removal of people with different sectarian identities— around which so much sectarian violence was centred had already succeeded. Hundreds of thousands of people in all had been forced from their neighbourhoods and communities previously mixed became sectarian enclaves. The 'success' of this cleansing —the fact that it had already worked and been carried out— contributed to a reduction in violence as there were less people of different sectarian identities in violence affected communities to displace, and the perceived threat from the other was reduced.

Mahdi army ceasefire

The Mahdi Army ceasefire which was declared eight months after the start of the surge is seen by many as having been one of the single most important factors contributing to the decline in violence in Iraq. Until the ceasefire, the civil war and violence in Iraq —even well into the surge— were still rampant. The motivations for the cease-fire were several, including in part increased pressure brought about through the performance of the Iraqi security forces and the surge. Principal drivers, however, related to Muqtada Al-Sadr's reassertion of control and disciplining of factions which were operating independently, as well as a growing resentment amongst much of its Shia base to continuing violence.[235]

Strengthening security forces

The strengthening of the Iraqi security forces and gradually improving performance were also seen as contributing factors to improving stability and reduced violence —though perspectives on this are very mixed. Many see Iraq's security forces as being highly sectarian and under the influence of political parties, while others noted increasing confidence and trust in the security forces and improved performance during the 'surge' period. The March 2009 Operation *Sawlat al-Fursan* or 'Charge of the Nights' against Mahdi Army fighters in Basra and across the south was seen as a turning point. Though performance of the security forces were mixed, and many Iraqi civilians also died in the attacks and in US air force strikes in Basra and Baghdad, Maliki's willingness to take on the Mahdi Army was seen by many Sunnis as an indication that the state was not only against them and not only attacking Sunni forces.[236]

Consolidation of state control

After the brutal chaos following the invasion and the rise of sectarian violence and civil war, many Iraqis longed for the re-assertion of state control and the rule of law. While state performance in service delivery remained weak, increasing capability of security forces together with largesse from increased oil revenue allowed the state to re-establish authority and consolidate its presence in some areas. This was also in part linked with tactics of the surge. The establishment by Maliki of tribal support councils throughout the south was also a process of balancing the predominantly Sunni awakening councils and re-establishing influence of the government. Maliki attempted in this period to "establish the credibility of his government as the non-sectarian group that could protect the population."[237]

The surge & change in US policies

The surge brought many changes in US policies, strategy and tactics, both military and political and economic. Some factors of fundamental importance included:

- Many combat forces in Iraq were on their second or third tours of duty. This meant more seasoned soldiers and officers many of whom had an improved understanding of the situation on the ground and refrained from many of the tactical and operational mistakes and excesses which had escalated the war in 2003 – 2005

- Much of the anti-Sunni mind-set which had defined the United States approach until early 2006 was replaced with active engagement and a more balanced approach. This included practical cooperation with the Awakening Council

- The establishment of concrete blocks between neighbourhoods, while often deeply resented by people in that area, were accredited by some as having reduced inter-sectarian attacks in those areas

Many of the operational and tactical changes brought about in the Surge should have been evident to the US prior to its 2003 invasion. Senior strategic experts and analysts interviewed note that had policies implemented during the surge formed the base of US policies and tactics from 2003, much of the violence which followed could have been avoided.

Withdrawal of us forces from city centres

Perhaps the single most frequent factor cited by Iraqi interviewees on the cause of the decline in violence in Iraq is the withdrawal of US forces from city centres. This is strongly supported by the findings of the Christian Peacemaker Teams in Iraq report *Iraq after the occupation: Iraqis speak about the state of their country as the US military withdraws*.[238] This contrast with one of the key assessments of military analysts of the surge which attribute increased US military presence in key areas has having been a factor turning the tide against Al Qaeda. When questioned on this, interviewees cited the role of the Awakening Movement, the turning of tribal leaders against Al Qaeda, the Madhi Army surge, consolidation of state authority, and improved performance of security forces as more important factors. In particular, the withdrawal of US forces was cited as having made people feel:

i.   Safer
ii.   That their neighbourhoods were more under their control and not under the occupation
iii. That the state in Iraq was re-gaining some of its sovereignty and power

Withdrawal of US forces also removed some of the legitimization for violent attacks, and further strengthened the dynamic of people turning against violence. This is also re-enforced by the analysis of then CentCom Commander US General Abizaid from several years earlier that US presence in Iraq was the primary cause of most of the violence in Iraq.[239]

The Christian Peacemaker Team interviews with Iraqi citizens notes:

> "Half of respondents, however, indicate that the main cause of their sense of increased security is the withdrawal of US forces from the cities. The decreased visibility of US forces in Iraqi streets, they say, has resulted in decreased military action in residential areas and heightened feelings that people are in control of their own country." [240]

This is only a cursory assessment based upon interviews and review of relevant publications. Far more effort should be dedicated towards analysis and making visible of the factors which contributed to a decline in violence in Iraq. Particular focus should also be placed on Iraqi *agency*, and what was done by stakeholders, communities, organisations and leadership in Iraq which contributed to this reduction.

Equally important is the need to pay attention to factors which can contribute to risk and possible escalation of violence. If opportunities for Sunnis to engage in the political system and for members of the Awakening movement to be supported contributed to a reduction in violence, failure to effectively integrate these forces and to create opportunities for them could contribute to continuing or future instability. Given the relatively poor record of re-integration of former militias and Awakening movement members, this deserves greater effort and attention.

Economic

"The two key issues that are consistently mentioned by people, as causes of frustration and local level tension, are: the disruption of basic services; and the poor status of the economy, which, at the local level, translates into limited economic opportunities and access to funding, for instance in critical sectors like agriculture and trade, and in low access to employment. The poor management of resources, for instance water, and environmental degradation are also mentioned as concerns. The extensive system of social benefits not only does not replace access to services and opportunities, but does not seem to provide sufficient support to the most vulnerable groups, as persistent levels of poverty, high school drops out and the extreme vulnerability of some groups (e.g. women's headed households, children, elders, and disabled) show. Levels of unemployment, high across the country, reach such figures as 80% in some districts, according to the community assessments."[241]

Iraq Community-Based Conflict Assessments: A Synthesis

"Iraq would seem to have virtually every ingredient for upheaval: crippling poverty, few good jobs, creaky public services, anger at an entrenched political elite and thousands of young people who meet online to vent their grievances and organize protests."[242]

Iraqi Protesters Seek Not a New Regime, but Jobs Jack Healy

"Despite being a middle-income country, Iraq faces challenges commonly found in countries at lower income levels. These include: (i) excessive dependence on one primary commodity, namely, crude oil; (ii) significant infrastructure reconstruction and rehabilitation needs; and (iii) declining absolute standards of living. That said, Iraq's success in stabilizing the macro economy has been an important step towards reversing this situation. Yet much more progress is needed to diversify the economy and generate sustainable livelihoods for the majority of the population."[243]

The Iraq Briefing Book

SfP interviewees identified seven key economic factors currently affecting prospects for peace and stability in Iraq. These included:

1. Continuing violence and instability in some areas (particularly affecting opportunities for economic development in areas affected by violence);
2. Lack of Agreement at the Political level on key laws and legislation (eg. Hydrocarbon Law, Status of Disputed Territories)
3. High levels of unemployment and underemployment
4. Over-reliance on a single major revenue source — oil — and lack of economic diversification
5. Wide-spread and systematic corruption from local to national levels
6. Poor Service Delivery
7. Poverty, Social Exclusion and Vulnerability

Each of these factors was identified by more than 50% of respondents. Additionally, seven further factors were cited as having had a substantial impact on Iraq's economic development since 2003:

1. Failure to establish a secure environment and rise of wide-spread violence and 'chaos' following the occupation
2. Wide-spread looting and pillaging and destruction of existing infrastructure
3. Mismanagement of Reconstruction efforts by the Occupation authorities, international contractors and the Iraqi Government
4. Forced exodus of much of Iraq's middle class and educated professionals
5. Dismissal and exodus of Iraq's managerial class from the state;
6. Creation of unemployment resulting from:
   • Occupation policies (in particular CPA Orders 1 and 2)

- Attempted imposition of 'shock doctrine' and structural adjustment including reduced investment in state enterprises
- Failure to prioritise job creation and employment generating measures
7. Poor Capacity of Iraqi Government and Local Authorities to Foster Economic Development & Poor Performance Record of State Institutions and Ministries

Prior to the first Gulf War Iraq was recognized as one of the most developed economies in the region. War, sanctions, years of neglect, coalition policies, and the violence which erupted across Iraq following the 2003 invasion as a result of the failure to establish security and stable governance all took their toll. Throughout the 1980s and the war with Iran the Iraqi state racked up increasing debt. Investments in economic development were diverted to the war effort. Following the imposition of sanctions on Iraq, overall economic activity deteriorated dramatically. Sanctions prevented import of key technologies and replacement parts. Deterioration in standards of living triggered an exodus of much of Iraq's educated and middle class. Poverty, malnutrition and unemployment or under-employment, together with corruption and black market economy all increased.

Following the 2003 invasion (i) Occupation policies —including the failure to plan properly / realistically for the needs of reconstruction and economic development in Iraq— and (ii) escalating violence, brought about further unemployment, destruction of infrastructure, forced population displacement, and reduced state and private investment, all of which took their toll on the economy. Lack of jobs and livelihood opportunities became a further factor in leading many men to join militias.[244]

From 1990 to today Iraqi's experienced a dramatic and then long-term sustained deterioration in their quality and standards of living. Recent trends have begun to show improvements and many Iraqis are optimistic about the future. Interviewees noted significant economic activity and improvements in areas where security has improved. With improved security, however, Iraqis are increasingly turning their attention to the need for better service delivery from the state and improved job opportunities. The rest of this section will focus briefly on five topics addressed in interviews and *SfP* research:

1. Unemployment
2. Poverty
3. Corruption
4. Basic Services
5. Oil Dependence and Economic Diversification

A final focus will take up what is perceived to be an actually improving situation in Iraq or the potential for improvement and opportunities for future development.

Unemployment
Official statistics provided in the *Joint Strategy Paper* of the European Union and Government of Iraq record 1.3 million unemployed out of a total Iraqi labour force of 8.5 million (15.2%). The paper goes on to note that unemployment is concentrated amongst youth, and especially girls and women, identifying 28.% percent of the population aged between 15 – 24 as being currently unemployed.[245] According to the Iraq Labour Force Analysis, one in three men between 20 – 24 years of age are unemployed, while the economic activity rate amongst Iraqi women is placed at 17%.[246] This marks a dramatic and severe deterioration in the economic condition for women compared to pre-war and pre-sanctions levels. Overall statistics, however, can hidepockets of severe unemployment which may be found in parts of the country. The *Iraq Community-Based Conflict Assessment* notes:

> "Levels of unemployment, high across the country, reach such figures as 80% in some districts, according to the community assessments. The loss and/or the capture of State jobs by powerful members of the community is also a source of grievance, in a context where jobs in the public sector remain the main source of formal employment."
> *Iraq Community-Based Conflict Assessments: A synthesis* (2009), p. 4

According to the 2009 BBC Iraq Poll, more than 60% of Iraqis perceive the availability of jobs to be either 'Quite Bad' or 'Very Bad'.

People's perceptions of availability of jobs in the village / Neighbourhood where they live [247]

	Feb '09	Mar '08	Aug'07	Feb'07	2005	2004
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Very good	7	7	4	3	11	7
Quite good	27	22	17	17	27	19
Quite bad	32	35	37	44	23	23
Very bad	34	35	43	35	34	46
Refused/don't know	-	1	-	-	5	6

In addition to official and unofficial 'unemployment', several *SfP* interviewees noted that there is also extensive *under-employment* in many areas, where people who previously held middle class jobs or who may have higher education degrees are now involved in menial labour, agricultural work, service industry or the NGO sector. Far more have been displaced or have left the country. Unemployment and underemployment amongst displaced people's and refugees are particularly high. As the security situation in many parts of the country is seen to be improving, jobs are increasingly becoming the number one priority for many people in Iraq.[248] If this is not addressed, many interviewees believed it could contribute to sustained instability and insecurity in the country.

Poverty

The sanctions throughout the 1990s and the years of war since 2003 saw a significant rise in poverty together with a reduction in the middle class in Iraq. This was a factor noted by many Iraqi interviewees. Increasingly unequal distribution of wealth, failure to develop a diversified economy, corruption, lack of jobs, problems in the agricultural sector, and misuse of resources by contractors were also seen as exacerbating poverty. According to the same EU-Iraqi government report cited above, 22.9% or about 6.9 out of 30 million of the Iraqi population are classified as poor (living on less than US$2.2 p/d).[249] The Iraq Partners Briefing Book, however, notes that much of Iraq's poverty is 'shallow', meaning that "a relatively small amount of resources (through income growth or transfer mechanisms) could lift most of the poor above the poverty line."[250] With increasing security, therefore, opportunities for economic development and effective development policies could help to lift significant numbers of Iraqi's out of poverty. Both Iraqi and international experts noted, however, that any measures or efforts to address poverty in Iraq need to take into account significant variations by governorate and, in some cases, urban-rural. In Al-Muthanna, for example, the poverty headcount index stands at 74.7%.[251]

Corruption

As noted in many areas throughout this report, one of the most commonly cited problems fuelling poor economic performance and lack of development in Iraq today —identified both by national and international interviewees— is corruption. In the winter/spring of 2011 this gave rise to increasing frustration in all parts of Iraq (North, Centre, South) and was a key issue amongst demonstrators calling for improved job opportunities, better service delivery, accountability, and ending corruption. Transparency International's 'Corruption Perceptions Index 2010' ranked Iraq as the fourth most corrupt country in the world.[252] In the oil sector this is particularly evident: according to a report by the Iraqi government identified five ways or channels in smuggling and profiteering from oil in 2005 until now. These include: 1. theft of crude and fuel oil from pipes and storages. 2. Overloading of crude and fuel oil in loading terminal. 3. Supplying incomplete imports of oil products. 4. Smuggling oil products to neighbouring countries. 5. Diverting oil products to the open market.), crude oil, public contracts, public trading organization, government services and employment.[253] In *SfP* interviews, local citizens, small businesses, NGOs, national and international organisations,

diplomats and Iraqi and international scholars and analysts cite corruption as a major obstacle to development, post-war reconstruction, and good governance. Rahim Hassan al-Uqailee, head of Iraq's Commission on Integrity —the government's own anti-corruption 'watchdog'— has complained that instead of fighting corruption, many Ministers seek to hide it within their Departments.[254]

Basic Services
Throughout the Spring of 2011, frustration at the failure to improve delivery of basic services in Iraq led to public demonstrations in several cities in Iraq including Baghdad, Kirkuk, Basra, Diwaniyah, Mosul, Anbar and other provinces. In a number of cities, heavy handed police repression led to casualties when police opened fire on crowds using life ammunition.[255] *SfP* researchers as well as *SfP* interviewees identified failure to improve delivery and provision of basic services as a significant cause of grievance for many Iraqis. Importantly, it is also a barrier to effective reconstruction and sustainable economic development. As interviewees in the South and Centre of Iraq stressed in particular, irregular supplies of electricity make it difficult to run businesses effectively. To address a key grievance of citizens and to improve economic performance, improved delivery of basic services should be a priority for the Iraqi government and its national and international partners.

Electricity
One of the most frequently cited grievances in Iraq relates to failure to provide regular and reliable electricity. The Christian Peacemakers Team report *Iraq After the Occupation* notes that "In February 2009, only 50 per cent of the Iraqi population had access to twelve or more hours of electricity a day."[256] More than 60% of Iraqis see the supply of electricity in their neighbourhood or village being either quite bad or very bad.[257] According to information provided by the Ministry of Electricity to the BBC cited in *Iraq: Facts and Figures,* Iraq is only able to generate "8,000 of the 13 – 15,000 megawatts (MW) of power required meeting Iraqi needs (50-60%)".[258] Distribution is erratic and uneven both regionally and within different neighbourhoods within city, and between urban and rural areas. In the northern Kurdistan region the situation was cited as being better.

Water & Sanitation
Lack of access to clean water and adequate sanitation is also a factor for many Iraqis. According to the EU – Iraqi Government *Joint Strategy Paper 2011 – 2013*[259]

- Access to clean water fell from 83% in 1990 to 77% in 2007
- Only 13% of households report stable and sufficient water supply
- 18 % of the poor use rivers or creeks as their primary source of water
- Over 80% of households do not treat their drinking and cooking water
- Over 40% of the rural population has inadequate sanitation

Terrible sanitation and failure to manage waste removal following the 2003 invasion led to abysmal living conditions in many parts of Baghdad (in particular poor, Shiite communities). This was cited in interviews as one of several factors that turned many Iraqis against the Occupation forces and to lose confidence in the ability of the 'new' leadership in Iraq to address the country's needs. Worsening sanitation —also a result of the sanctions imposed on Iraq in the 1990s— also had serious effects on health.

Together with improving electricity, ensuring access to clean water and adequate sanitation is an important *security* measure for Iraqis, as well as a necessary step to improve confidence in the state and government, people's outlook for the future, and a key need of the population.

Availability of Services
According to interviews with Iraqi and international experts, the situation relating to service delivery is gradually improving. This is supported by the 2009 and 2011 Brookings *Iraq Index*.

Estimated availability of essential services, February 2008 & February 2009[260]

Service	February 2008	February 2009
Sewage (% population with access to sanitation)	8%	20%
Water (% population with access to potable water)	22%	45%
Electricity (% population with access to 12 hours of power per day)	25%	50%
Fire Departments (Equipped stations per 25K population)	23%	42%
Fuel (Meet demand)	25%	48%
Public Health (Population with access to Health Services)	18%	30%
Housing (% population with adequate housing)	25%	50%
Trash (% population serviced)	18%	45%

Estimated availability of essential services 2008, 2009, early 2011[261]

Service	February 2008	February 2009	Early 2011
Sewage (% population with access to sanitation)	8%	20%	26%
Water (% population with access to potable water)	22%	45%	70%*

*UNESCO reports 7,6 million lacking access to drinking water. A generously low estimate of availability based off total population is offered.

Progress, however, in some areas is slow and uneven. To ensure service delivery does not become a factor to fuel / escalate conflicts, it is important that the state be seen as working to provide improvements in service delivery and that potential biases in terms of some communities benefitting and others been neglected be avoided. Areas which may be in seen as at greater risk of instability or with less confidence in the state should in particular be identified for priority improvements to show people a concrete benefit and to strengthen confidence.

Percentage of the Population MPI Poor and Deprived
The Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative Multi-Dimensional Poverty Index Country Briefing for Iraq also points to a significant discrepancy in provision of some services between rural and urban areas (as illustrated by the diagram below).[262] Together with other factors (see the box on Agriculture below) this also fuels rural to urban migration.

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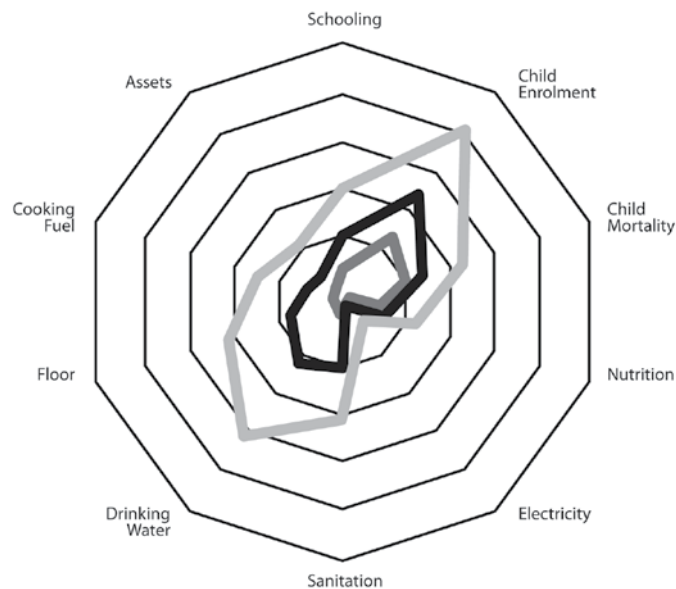
Development Vulnerability in Iraq
The UN Information Agency and Analysis Unit in their Iraq's Transition: Issues and Priorities (2009) note four categories of 'unmet needs' affecting development vulnerability in Iraq:

1. those due to recent violence (post-2003, including needs resulting from displacement, infrastructure damage, and lack of access to services and humanitarian assistance, particularly in Salah al-Din, Anbar, Baghdad, Diyala, Kirkuk, Ninewa, and Wassit);

2. those due to chronic under-investment and marginalization (since the 1970s, most notably in Basra, Missan, Muthanna and Thiqar in southern Iraq and Dohuk, Ninewa and Suleimaniya in northern Iraq);

3. those due to internal administrative disputes (such as the Arab-Kurdish "green line" spanning Diyala, Kirkuk, Ninewa and Salah al-Din), and

4. those along Iraq's national borders (in particular the Iran-Iraq border, due to pervasive landmines, and the Iraq-Turkey border, due to ongoing shelling of border areas targeting the PKK)[263]

</div>

Oil Dependence and Economic Diversification
Iraq's economy and state revenue remain highly dependent on oil. Systematic mismanagement of the oil sector by the CPA in the immediate period following the invasion combined with wide-spread theft and corruption led to the loss of billions of dollars in potential revenue, severely impacting immediate post-war recovery efforts.[264] Initial forecasts by US war planners were that Iraqi oil revenue would pay for post-war reconstruction. US Deputy Secretary of Defence Paul Wolfowitz testified to Congress in 2003 that "The oil revenues of that country could bring between $50 billion and $100 billion over the course of the next two or three years."[265] It was not until 2006/2007 that revenues began to reach over $30 billion.[266] Yet while Iraq's massive reserves of oil remain a potential blessing for the country, they pose several challenges as well. Fluctuating oil prices have given rise to a 'boom-bust' pattern in Iraq.[267] This creates instability in the economy and in government

service delivery. Over-reliance on oil could also lead to a failure to achieve economic diversification. While an important revenue source, the oil industry is not labour intensive.[268] To improve standard of living and conditions for the Iraqi population, attention needs to be given to economic diversification and employment generation. Interviewees also noted the growing role of the private sector and 'big oil' interests in Iraq's oil economy. It was said that communities are often not aware of contracts signed between the government and oil companies, or the obligations that companies have to allocate part of their revenues to the area they are working in. Extensive pollution is also being caused and communities and affected people are often not aware of their rights. CSOs and government were cited as having important roles and responsibilities to increase public awareness of rights, hold companies accountable, and address issues of corruption and lack of transparency.

Agriculture

The topic of agriculture was not addressed in *SfP* interviews yet is critically important to economic development, achieving the MDGs, and improving quality of life and security in Iraq. Agricultural production has decreased substantially in recent years, in part due to severe drought, lack of proper investment and inadequate management of water resources and maintenance of irrigation systems. In recent years Iraq has experienced two severe prolonged droughts and four years of declining rainfall (25 – 65% below normal levels). Wheat production in 2009 was down 45%, "resulting in massive loss of seed reserves for future planting and, forcing the country to significantly increase food imports at great cost to the economy."[269] This also affects food security.[270] The cumulative impact has led to a mass exodus of farmers and population movement from rural to urban areas, where income opportunities are insufficient and exacerbating the strain on cities already struggling to provide basic social services.[271]

Improving Situation

All in all, *SfP* interviews noted a significant improvement in the economic situation in Iraq from the period 2003 – 2007. An improved sense of security in many parts of the country was cited as a major factor.[272] GDP estimates and projections show gradual but continual improvements, though also highlight the vulnerability of Iraq's economy to price fluctuations in the oil market (as mentioned above).

GDP estimates and projections 2002 – 2010

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009e	2010e
Nominal GDP (in USD billion)	20.5	13.6	25.8	31.4	45.1	57.0	86.6	65.8	84.1
Of which non-oil GDP (%)	32.0	32.0	30.4	30.6	33.1	*	*	*	*
Per Capita GDP (USD)	802	518	951	1,124	1,568	1,926	2,845	2,108	2,626
Real GDP (% change)	-7.8	-41.4	46.5	3.7	5.9	4.1	9.5	4.2	2.6
Overall Fiscal Balance (in % of GDP)	*	*	-40.6	9.8	-6.1	*	*	*	*
Consumer Price Inflation (annual %)	19.0	34.0	32.0	32.0	50.0	30.1	2.7	-2.8	5.1

(e): IMF Estimates, (p): projections, *: Not available
NOTE ON TABLE: 2007 and 2008 Real GDP Growth projections are provided by the authors and disagree with the figures released by the IMF and World Bank of 14,4% and 12,9% growth, respectively.

Source: Brookings Institute[273]

Future Development

While many Iraqis and international experts interviewed were optimistic about Iraq's future economic development, and continually improving quality of life for most Iraqis, several qualifications were listed. Sustained economic development requires medium-to-long-term diversification of Iraq's economy. As noted by the Iraq Partners' Forum "Given the abundance of land, non-oil natural resources and labour, economic diversification is a realistic goal for Iraq."[274]

Mechanisms to manage Iraq's oil wealth from a long-term perspective and to use this wealth to *fuel economic diversification* should be pursued. The lack of coherent economic planning for most of the period following the Iraq invasion was cited as a major obstacle. The recent creation of the National Development Plan (NDP) for 2010-2014 and a National Investment Plan (NIP) —both of which recognize the importance of quality service delivery to sustained economic growth and including all segments of the population as fundamental for stability— is therefore an important step.[275] Low capacity of state institutions and wide-spread corruption, however, could still impact effectiveness in implementation. Iraqi citizens, media, unions and civil society organisations which have recently become increasingly active in voicing their demands, should also play an active role in holding the government to account and as partners /drivers supporting measures to improve development opportunities. Risks remain real, however. With a growing youth population in need of jobs, major price volatility in oil markets, and a strong legacy in recent years of social exclusion and instability, good governance and effective economic management will be crucial to ensure Iraq's development opportunities can be realised.

Gender

> The gravity of the situation of women, as reported by recent data (e.g CCA pre-analysis) and confirmed by the community assessments, deserves particular attention. With extremely few exception, and with slightly different degrees of severity, the assessments report the following: women are increasingly excluded from public life and political participation; they are excluded from access to jobs and services; in very poor rural areas in particular, but not exclusively, women are married at very young age; widows lack basic protection; women's headed households experience high levels of poverty and neglect. Honour killings and other severe violation of women's basic human rights are also increasingly reported.
>
> *Iraq Community-Based Conflict Assessments: A synthesis* (2009), p. 4[276]

The quote above should be a clear indicator for all citizens, political and state leadership, and national and international organisations in Iraq of the importance of addressing gender issues and, in particular, the situation of women in Iraq. It is important to note, however, that 'gender' does not mean *only* 'women'. It includes men, women, and others (transgender, trans-sexual, transvestite). While most studies addressing 'gender' in Iraq focus on the situation of women (including the impact of war and violence on women, education, health and economic indicators for women and girl children), it is also important to recognize the gender-dimensions of the war and instability in Iraq on men and boys. Many men and boys have become active as combatants in the post-2003 period in Iraq (before 2003 participation in the Army and therefore in the wars in which Iraq was engaged was standard for most military age men). The overwhelming majority of the armed and security forces as well as the militias are made up of men in Iraq. Men were often particularly targeted in sectarian killings and many have been forced to flee abroad or are internally displaced. The burden on boys / young men who have had to take over roles as caregivers when their fathers and older male relatives have been killed (as also for women and female-headed households) has been significant. Young men were also often expected to join militias or security forces to defend / protect their communities or to seek revenge for killings. The socialization of violence and experience of violence for these men and young boys can have lasting and substantial impacts. Many men are also affected by high levels of unemployment and general insecurity. This also affects their traditional role as 'providers'. While the remainder of this section focuses on women, greater attention should be given to the impact, socialization and effects of the instability in Iraq on men. This includes also the need for demobilization and psycho-social support for male combatants. The rights of transgender/trans-sexual in Iraq are also of particular concern. What information is available seems to confirm that there is wide-spread discrimination and social stigma associated with this group, and important human rights concerns.

Background: Women in Iraq before 2003

Iraqi women during the 1980s were amongst the most educated in the region. They were part of the labour force and visibly active on almost all levels of state institutions and bureaucracy. Middle class women in particular were able to take on increasing roles in education, government bureaucracy, medicine, and other professional fields, while rural and lower class women also benefitted from increased medical coverage, educational opportunities, and social mobility.[277] In the constitution of 1970, Article 19 stated that "all citizens of Iraq are equal before the law regardless of gender, language, religion, or social origin". This applied across the religious and ethnic spectrum of the country, and the secular courts of Iraq made no differentiation between citizens, whether they were male or female, Arab, Kurd, or Turkmen, etc. In the 1970s and 1980s, Iraqi women benefited from progressive laws promoting their political and economic participation. The Baathist regime pushed female education and women's participation in the workforce and politics. In 1976 the Compulsory Education Law was issued, which helped to eradicate illiteracy especially among Iraqi women. By the late 1980s, Iraq had one of the region's highest female literacy rates. In addition to all previous decisions, in 1980 law no. 55 was issued giving Iraqi women the right to vote and to be nominated to parliament and other professional associations. In 1986 Iraq became one of the first countries to ratify the convention on Elimination of all forms to discrimination against women SEDAWO treaty.[278]

All this proved reversible, however, as Saddam's turn to social conservatism in the 1990s, as well as sanctions, took their toll.[279] Al-Ali from Centre for Gender Studies / SOAS, university of London argues that aside from the most obvious effects related to the atrocious humanitarian situation, there have been changes in gender relations in Iraq and ideologies in the context of wider social changes related to war, sanctions and changing state policies. The demographic cost of two wars, political repression and the forced economic migration of men triggered by the imposition of international sanctions created a context in which there were a high number of widows and female-headed households. In Basra, up to 60% of all households were female-headed in 2003, according to the October 2003 UNICEF report. With the upsurge of religious identity politics after Saddam's fall, the secular framework that had benefited women was rejected by powerful elements within Iraq's political matrix. Female unemployment rose and literacy plummeted. These factors were significantly exacerbated following the 2003 invasion and occupation of Iraq.[280]

Impact of Armed Conflict on Women

Women tend to suffer in gender-specific ways in a country emerging out of or in the midst of bloody conflict. Al-Ali notes that men continue to be the major decision-makers, politicians, generals and soldiers involved in "making war". They often continue to retain power afterwards. He refers to the fact that an estimated 90 per cent of current war casualties are civilians, the majority of who are women and children.[281] Since 2003, Iraqi women were —and still are— heavily affected by kidnapping, raping, unemployment, detention, indiscriminate killing, imprisonment and general insecurity in the country. Amnesty International's 2008 report on Iraq stated: "The level of the violence against woman was increased; this led women to prefer to stay home rather than go to work". In the UNAMI delegation report no. 13 published on 2 December 2008 it was stated that: "there is an improvement in the Iraqi security situation. However, the Iraqi woman is still suffering from the violence whether in the economic or social life (honour killing)".[282] One of the first warning signs for women's rights came in December 2003 when the US-appointed Interim Governing Council (IGC) slipped through Resolution 137, replacing Iraq's personal status law with a sharia-based system that would have put family affairs in the hands of clerics. Relentless lobbying by Iraqi women's groups and international supporters managed to overturn the resolution, but the Shia religious parties had made clear their intent. In January 2009, Iraq's Minister of Women's Affairs said "we couldn't know the statistics for the number of women detained whether in Occupier prisons or government prisons".[283] She resigned in Feb. 2009 from Al-Maliki's government stating: "we have many problems related to Iraqi women. We have an army of widows, unemployed, oppressed and detained women. I feel like I am sitting in a minister's chair enjoying the privileges of a minister but I cannot act as one," and she added "The occupation, terrorism, the economy collapsing ... all that produced an army of widows, an increase in the number of divorcees, unmarried women, women beggars, and Women's issues are not a priority for the government ".[284] The Humanitarian Report of the U.N for Feb.2009 stated that "the UN is trying to focus upon the country's women. The U.N. is worried that the violence and war has severely set back their status. Women are more likely to end up poor, be unemployed, and lack food, and other basic necessities. 1 in 10 families are headed by women, and 80% of those are widows, having lost their husbands to the fighting. Only 17% of women have jobs or are looking for them compared to 81% of men. Illiteracy is also high, affecting 24% of women over 10 years old compared to 11% for men. Many girls have also stopped going to school because of the violence.[285]

Domestic Violence

Overall protection of the physical integrity of women in Iraq —both in public and in the home— is quite weak. Interviewees and statistics both indicated that violence against women in Iraq has risen in recent years. A key challenge in this regard is the high level of acceptance of violence within many marriages. Though domestic violence is largely under-reported, it is believed to be common —with about one in five married Iraqi women victims of physical domestic violence and one in three subject to emotional violence.[286] The cultural toleration of violence against women in the household and family is high. Customs effectively permit husbands, brothers, fathers or sons to punish women and young girls who 'infringe on traditional codes of honour'. Acceptance of this violence by women is also

a significant cultural factor. Almost three in five women believe a husband is justified in beating his wife.[287]

Female Genital Mutilation

Female genital mutilation is not a general practice in Iraq, however, Amnesty International reports that NGOs based in northern Iraq have observed its occurrence in some areas, particularly within regions in Kurdistan.

Missing Women

An elevated sex ratio in favor of men suggests that Iraq might be a country of concern in relation to missing women.

Women's Participation in Politics

Article 49, 4th, of the new Iraqi permanent constitution of 2005, official copy, stated that "The elections law shall aim to achieve a percentage of representation for women of not less than one-quarter of the members of the Council of Representatives". This has been achieved. However, women remain under-represented in senior government and public sector positions.[288] In the 2005 elections for permanent Iraqi government women's political participation was active but symbolic. According to the election law Number 16 (article 11) "every 3 nominees in the list should include a woman nominee, and the first 6 nominees should include at least two women nominees; thus until the end of the list". Consequently, women received 73 seats of 275 in the 2005 elections. However, the elections lists were sectarian and ethnic. For example, list no. 555 was for Shia. Women in this came only from Shia group. List no. 618 was for Sunni. The list for the Kurdish coalitions had just Kurdish women representatives.[289] This meant women's participation in political life was according to sectarian party politics.

Still, Iraqi women are doing their best to hold their own. Nearly a third of candidates in the March 2010 parliamentary elections were women, representing unprecedented participation and a substantial improvement over the 2005 elections. This flatly contradicted arguments that there were not enough interested or competent women to fill the quota. Women constitute a majority in five of the twenty-four parliamentary committees, with two women serving as committee chief and several more serving as deputies. Moreover, women parliamentarians have demonstrated better attendance and preparation than their male counterparts, and their presence in parliament seems to be a bulwark against rigid ideology since women are more likely than men to vote across party and sectarian lines. They also serve on committees focused on the practical tasks of rebuilding the country: Education, Labour and Services, Human Rights, Investment and Reconstruction, and Women, Family, and Children. Critics argue that their role is minimal and could be described as 'disguised unemployment'. From this point of view women in government and state institutions are seen as being marginalised from decision-making. Merti, education and political awareness were not taken into consideration for many women who were appointed. Instead they are there as supporters of their parties with limited scope for autonomous action. Independent women in state institutions are few.[290]

Widow's & Female-Headed Households

Women-headed households disproportionately live in poverty: seven in 10 female-headed households are poor.[291] The Human Relief Foundation estimates that there are approximately 250,000 widows in Iraq. A UNDP-commissioned study on widows in Baghdad found that, in one small district of Al-Sadr City (Haiour), almost every multi-family household had one widow. It is not only widows who find themselves without husbands, but also women whose husbands went abroad to escape the bleak conditions and find ways to support their families. Other men just abandoned their wives and children, unable to cope with the inability to live up to the social expectations of being the provider. During the 1990s, female headed households, rural areas, and poor households had the highest rates of infant and child mortality. Whilst those whose husbands were killed in battle have received a small government pension, those whose husbands were killed by the former regime for political reasons have received no benefits and have been left to fend for themselves.

Women and Education

Women's illiteracy remains high, particularly for younger women. At nearly 19 percent, illiteracy rates for young women are nearly double the rates of those for young men.[292] Enrolment ratios of females to males however have consistently increased between 1990 and 2007. According to COSIT the figures are[293]:

Primary	79.5 to 94.5 per cent
Secondary	61.4 to 88.4 per cent
University	50.9 to 80.6 per cent
Higher Education	25.3 to 61.6 per cent

Women and Economy

Female participation in the labour force is also lower than that of men. On average they receive less pay and are often segregated in particular occupations.[294] Health problems and social norms have also played a role in preventing nearly 40% of women from finding jobs. Of those able to work, 71% remain unemployed. Large numbers of women n in need (approx 40%) remain dependent on relatives. USID reports that 60 percent of its small business grants in Iraq through 2006 were awarded to women. Meanwhile, beginning in 2003, the World Bank launched its Capacity Building Training Program for Iraqi Women in Business. This in turn was in response to a request made in 2003 by Dr. Rajaa H. Khuzai—one of three female members of the IGC and later elected to the National Assembly—for international assistance in developing Iraqi women entrepreneurs. As the security situation improves, additional international companies entering Iraq can benefit from partnering with women-led businesses.

Women and Displacement

According to the IOM, displaced Iraqi female-headed families who have returned home are experiencing major livelihood challenges. 74% are struggling to secure adequate nutrition for their families.[295]

Women's Rights

Many women, for example, reported that they have been forced to wear a headscarf or restrict their movements in fear of harassment from men in many governorates in Iraq. Limited numbers of female case and police officers reduce women's reporting of abuses to the authorities. Many women —and men— also lack awareness about women's rights and reporting mechanisms. This, together with limited outreach by law enforcement and a socially and culturally perceived shame associated with sexual and gender-based violence and abuse limit both women's ability and willingness to seek redress for human rights violations they experience.[296] If this is to be overcome, there need to be specific incentives and encouragement / support for women to report, and improved training for gender-sensitive from state institutions and police services.[297] Al-Ali suggests that Islamization in Iraq today fulfils two objectives: a break with the previous secular regime of Saddam Hussein, and resistance to the occupying forces. This has contributed to a reduced role and space for women in the politics of Iraq today. Iraqi women tend to be unaware that they can seek redress through formal justice mechanisms.

Generation[298]

Children

The war and violence —together with the sanctions which preceded them— have had a devastating impact on the children of Iraq. The situation across the country varies significantly, however, with the greatest impact in the Centre and South. The collapse of state services, widespread violence and social, economic, and political instability, together with the loss of tens —if not hundreds— of thousands of parents and caregivers have combined to create a context in which children are particularly vulnerable. Child protection in Iraq today is limited. According to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, there are approximately 4.5 million children in Iraq who are orphans. Nearly 70% of them lost their parents following the invasion in 2003 and ensuing violence which engulfed Iraq. Of these, an estimated 600.000 children are living in the streets without housing or basic food or protection. Only 700 children are accommodated in the 18 orphanages established across Iraq.[299] Girl children are also particularly vulnerable. Child marriage currently stands at 19%, while child prostitution and abuse of female children has increased.[300]

In the field of education, net enrolment in primary school has improved, reaching 87% for boys and 82% for girls in 2007. This figure drops to 68%, however, for girls in the case of rural enrolment. Approximately 9 in 10 children under the age of 15 do not attend school regularly. This is fuelled by the continuing situation of insecurity, the need for children to contribute to home and agricultural labour, and negative attitudes towards girls' education. Figures for high school education are lower: only 25% of all high school age children enrol in highschool. Only 10% continue on to completion.[301] As noted in the Final Report of the on Iraq, *Monitoring the Situation of Women and Children*:

> "Economic constraints on families, exacerbated by conflict, have made prospects for child labour more attractive than school attendance, particularly in camps for displaced persons. By 2006, one in nine children aged five to 14 were working" [302]

This situation is exacerbated in rural areas, where the number of children in work is three times higher than in urban areas.[303]

It is important not to overlook the impact of violence and sectarian division on children. Direct experiencing and witnessing of violence, and living in an environment / context which has been afflicted by severe violence, can have significant short and long-term effects. Today, from an early age children learn to see other groups as the 'enemy'. Before 2003, all Iraqis received Arabic sessions in Iraqi schools. Most older generations of Iraqis have a common language. Now, each ethnic group has their school and language and most of them cannot understand each other's language (this is particularly significant in the North). This means they have lost the means to communicate with and know the other. As each group is raised with its own analysis and learning of history and what is happening in Iraq, and often living in different / separated areas and with limited contact and interaction with Iraqis of other backgrounds / religions, the sediments for long-term division are being laid.[304] *Witnessing* of violence has also played an important role. This is captured powerfully in a quote from Nir Rosen's *Aftermath*:

> "I told Um Omar that I could see the children were still afraid. «How do you want them not to be afraid after they saw the terrorist militias raiding their areas, killing their fathers, killing their brothers, and destroying their houses? I know a displaced woman who told me that she saw two of her neighbours being dragged away just because they were Sunnis. She said they dragged the father and his son and killed them. How do you expect the young children to forget them easily? Obviously these kind of things have more impact on the spirit of children than they do on older people, and I don't think that it will just go away and the wounds will heal quickly.»" [305]

Careful attention should be given to ensuring psycho-social care and protection of children, and to addressing the impacts of this violence on children. Special efforts are also needed

to address the impact of current polarizations and divisions resulting from the sectarian violence since 2003 on children and youth.

Youth

According to the UN Population Division, 43 per cent of the Iraqi population is under the age of 15, falling into the category of children and youth.[306] Youth up to the ages of 25 – 30 have lived mainly in a period in which Iraq was either in the midst of war (Iran-Iraq War, post-2003) and sectarian violence or under sanctions. Many youth have been involved as soldiers or combatants in militias and self-protection forces. In the centre and the south of Iraq, these young people have grown up in a context of occupation, sectarian violence, disruption of families, forced displacement, and, in many cases, witnessing killings, torture and abuse. Access to education and schooling was also severely affected. Hundreds of thousands have also experienced internal displacement or have had to leave Iraq as refugees from the violence or overall chaos affecting the country. The situation in Northern Iraq, however, with a higher degree of stability from 1996 onwards, was significantly different. In all parts of Iraq, however, young people represent both a tremendous hope for the future and a potentially destabilizing factor. Factors such as the lasting impact of sectarian violence and division, high levels of corruption, the weakness of state institutions and their failure to deliver basic services, and limited job and economic opportunities, are giving rise to increasing frustration amongst many youth.

Interviewees in the centre of Iraq identified three categories of youth:

1. Those who identify with political parties or militias in Iraq today and believe that if they belong to them they will obtain power to protect themselves or their families in a context of sectarian struggle. Many also see these organisations as the platforms through which to achieve or protect the aspirations of their community. Accordingly, large numbers in this category become bodyguards, militias or soldiers in the new Iraqi National Army or Police;

2. A second category of youth is made up of the largely skilled or educated youth, many of whom seek to leave Iraq as they believe they cannot find themselves or build a safe future for themselves and their families in Iraq, and instead seek work abroad;

3. A third category —growing up in the midst of violence— sees the situation affecting Iraq as a permanent one. For many in this group the only possible response is to accept sectarianism, daily violence, weak government, and the absence of laws. A feeling of resignation and disempowerment is strong amongst this group. Others seek to identify opportunities for employment and meeting basic needs for their families and surviving under the conditions in the country.

A fourth category can also be found in youth actively mobilizing to engage other youth and citizens in Iraq, sometimes reaching out across sectarian lines, to address issues affecting the country —from the lack of sustainable development to continuing sectarian violence, corruption and failure to provide for basic services. Many of these youth were inspired by events in Egypt and Tunisia and more broadly throughout the region. They also draw upon a long history of political activism and social mobilization in Iraq. This category represents an interesting (and possibly growing) sector, though it remains unclear whether they can also reach out to youth in rural areas, to other generations, and across sectarian lines.

Interviewees in the North of Iraq cited concerns over economic and employment as key issues affecting tension of youth and middle aged with the government. In the centre and south, job / economic and physical security and safety from sectarian violence are key concerns.

Intermarriage —and inter-mingling— between youth of different ethnic groups / sectarian backgrounds is rare in Iraq today, a result both of the success of forced displacements and ethnic cleansing and the lingering context of sectarian division, polarization and continuing violence.

The absence of effective avenues for meaningful social, economic and political participation for youth is a significant concern and could contribute to instability in the future. Government and NGOs should pay particular attention to creating enabling opportunities including investment in employment generation, improving security, and high quality training and education for youth.

'Middle Aged'

The 'Middle Aged' in Iraq range from 30 – 55+ in age. Many of them remember a time before the war with Kuwait and 1991 war and sanctions. This is a generation which in many cases has memories of a more stable period in Iraq, though for Shia and Kurds these often include memories of repression and systematic violence against their communities. This is also true for Sunnis who resisted or sought alternatives to Saddam Hussein's rule. In the South and Centre of Iraq this generation has lived through massive disruption, sectarian killings, economic collapse, and wide-spread instability. Hundreds of thousands have been killed and additional hundreds of thousands displaced within Iraq or have fled the country. While many did not support the sectarian killings which affected the country, there remained few effective ties mobilizing across sectarian lines to prevent them. Middle and Upper Class Iraqis of this generation often yearn for a period of greater economic and political stability; however there is no common, unifying vision for the future of Iraq. Professionals —including teachers, engineers, doctors, and others— were particularly affected by the violence following 2003 (as well as the sanctions before) and many left Iraq. There has been only limited return.

Elderly

Life expectancy today in Iraq has fallen to 58 years (down from 63 years 30 years ago, and below the 68 average globally). Many elderly in Iraq have experienced severe dislocation with extended periods of political and economic instability and physical insecurity. While social ties and networks remain strong, there is a lack of state support and protection for the needs of the elderly in Iraq. Many have witnessed or lived through (as well as participated in) extensive periods of violence. Many may have seen their loved ones and family members killed. Particular attention should be given to ensuring the dignity, security and social and economic needs of the elderly. Interviewees noted that many amongst Shia and Kurdish elderly may be seeking revenge / redress for violence done to them (and their families and communities) under the old regime. Many Sunni feel they are inappropriately being identified as the 'enemy' as they also suffered under Saddam's regime. Elderly have played important roles both in mitigating and supporting sectarian violence in Iraq. If efforts are to be made to support authentic national reconciliation, building an inclusive future for the people of Iraq, and healing from the legacies of the past and present, it will be important to ensure that the elderly are not neglected and cast aside as they have been in many other countries experiencing transition. Their potential role as leaders both in families and more broadly in the community, and their memory of what Iraq —and their communities— has lived through, can be called upon to address actual grievances and contribute to healing and reconciliation.

Society, culture & identity

Iraqi society is often described as a mosaic. Ethnically it is made up of Arabs, Kurds, Turkmen and Cheldo-Assyrians. Religiously it contains Muslims (Sunni and Shia), Christians, Sabians, Yazidis and a small Jewish community. One of the most consistent comments made by *SfP* researchers and Iraqis interviewed by the project is that, **while ethno-sectarian divisions may have existed in Iraq before the war, sectarian hatred did not.** *SfP* researchers from the North, Centre and South of Iraq all pointed out that average Iraqis, in their communities, lived together in peace and often inter-married. While there was a high degree of state violence against Iraqis who resisted or opposed the Ba'athist state, Iraqi *citizens* were not sectarian or against other religious communities. The *Iraq Community-Based Conflict Assessments* note that:

> "The cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity of the country has been more often richness than a problem in the long history of Iraq. In a context of severe deprivation (e.g. insecurity, poverty, lack of open political system/democracy), this diversity has been and is easily exploited by individuals and groups that operate beyond the law and for their own self-interest."[307]

This view was strongly confirmed by *SfP* interviews. An 'Iraqi' identity was also clearly visible, though in Northern Iraq many interviewees identified more strongly with a Kurdish identity and possible future Kurdish state. As Munson notes:

> "A wide-ranging series of focus-group discussions with Iraqis conducted in the summer of 2003 determined Iraqi national identity to be stronger than many expected. Interviewers asked the respondents to choose the title that best identified them from a list that included Iraqi, Arab or Kurd, Muslim, member of a family or tribe, or Sunni, Shia, or Christian. The leading response was "Iraqi." [308]

He also goes on to note that mixed families played a crucial role in preventing descent into all-out civil war in Iraq, and that many Iraqis were proud of the mix in their communities and inter-marriages between Sunnis, Shia'as and Kurds.[309] A survey conducted in 2004 indicated that Iraqi Arabs "were the most likely to emphasize group loyalty over individualism out of any population surveyed."[310] 96% of Kurds, 86% of Shia and 68% of Sunni expressed having a "great deal" of trust in others in their own sectarian group. At the same time, 86% of Iraqi Arabs —Sunni and Shia— responded that they were "very proud" of their national identity. The figure amongst Kurds was 34%. Given the history of violence carried out against them by the Iraqi state this figure is not surprising. Munson goes on to note that only 1/3 of Iraqis expressed trust for other Iraqis outside of their ethno-sectarian group, but that this figure was nearly twice as high as the number of Europeans who identified other European nationalities as "very trustworthy".[311] The division of Iraqis into three 'camps' —Shia, Sunni and Kurd— after the 2003 invasion was therefore not necessary: Iraqis have many different and multiple, and often overlapping identities as well. Many interviewed felt that the rise in sectarianism in Iraq was a result of the poor implementation of transition policies (explored above in this report), and politically imposed sectarianism. Sectarian media was also cited as having played a key role. This combined with the unstable politics and security situation after the invasion, reprisal killings against many seen to be close to the Ba'athists, and an agenda to instigate sectarian violence and civil war from Al-Qaeda.[312] The impact of this was to give rise to a brutal and bloody period of inter-sectarian violence beyond anything previously witnessed in Iraq and shocking to many Iraqis. The full extent of its impact on Iraqi society has still not been fully comprehended. As noted by NCCI:

> "The occupation of Iraq has brought the country several decades backward in terms of socioeconomic development. Basic services, such as electricity, drinking water, and sanitation systems, deteriorated to an unprecedented level that was unmatched even during the period of international sanctions (1991-2003). Basic human and social rights, including security, health, education, and work, are still inaccessible for the majority of Iraqis."[313] "…as the state's ability to provide for the people declined, knock-off effects

such as the "brain drain" ensued, whereby skilled professional and academics left the country in search of better living standards. Emigration of the educated middle-class further impaired the reactive and organizational capacity of civil society."[314]

The Social Impact of Authoritarianism, Multiple Wars and Sanctions on Iraqi Society
It is almost impossible to overstate the impact which three decades of war and sanctions have had on Iraq. While Iraqi analysts strongly critical of the occupation often focused on the impact of the invasion and post-2003 violence, more rigorous assessment and the view of many Iraqis also draw attention to the long-term impact of the authoritarian regime in Iraqi before 2003, including brutal military campaigns and massacres carried out against the civilian population, and the impact of externally imposed sanctions on the country. In total, from the 1980s to today, millions have been killed while millions more have been displaced. Virtually the entire society has lived through the experience of deep violence and dislocation. Between the Iran-Iraq War, the first Gulf War, the US invasion and the violence which has affected the country since 2003, millions of Iraqi men have been involved as combatants and fighters, millions more have experienced violence, millions of children have become orphans while hundreds of thousands of families have been split apart. A society once proud of its social and economic achievements has seen standards of living, provision of services, and access to health and medicine plummet. This itself has caused severe dislocation for many Iraqis.

Rising Communal Sectarianism, Stereotypes and Enemy Images
Many factors fed into rising sectarianism in Iraq. Interviews cited:

- Occupation Policies
- The impact of previous violence and policies of the Ba'athist regime in Iraq, particularly the late 1980s campaigns against Kurds and the campaigns against Shia following their uprising after the first Gulf War
- The rise in bombings and terrorist attacks following the 2003 invasion
- Revenge killings against former Ba'athists
- Revenge killings in response to sectarian attacks
- The rise of sectarian ideologies

This was accompanied by increasing stereotypes and development of enemy images of "the other" who was seen to be a threat. Inter-communal trust and relationships broke down. Violence carried out against Shia was seen as an attack not hats community and a generalized Sunni refusal to accept a new order in Iraq in which they were not dominant. Sunni saw the policies of the occupation and new leaders brought in from abroad as directly targeting them and threatening their community. As noted by one *SfP* Researcher: "Most of the Arabs in Iraq see the Kurds as traitors because they supported the United States in the 2003 War and that they were in support of what they considered an American plan for dividing Iraq. On the other hand, most of the Kurds see the Arabs as chauvinists who stand against Kurds' rights because they demand to sever a part of Arab land."[315] While there was no deep-rooted sectarian hatred in Iraq, the context in Iraq following the invasion was one in which sectarian violence could easily be flamed. As explored elsewhere in the report, this has also led to an increase in attacks on religious minorities, including Christians, Yazidis, and Sabean. The impact this has had on society is an increase in stereotypes, breakdown in inter-communal relations, loss of trust, and a new demographic distribution.

Changing Demographics
The reproduction of these maps in miniature (below) makes it hard to read here, but one major impact on society in Iraq has been the destruction of mixed communities and rise of single-identity neighbourhoods. While these could be found even before 2003, their proportion has increased dramatically. As interviewees have noted, many young Iraqis no longer interact with people from other communities. As noted below as well, in the North many Kurds no longer learn to speak Arabic, making the potential for future interaction more difficult.

Ethnic-religious neighbourhoods in metropolitan Baghdad in 2003 and 2007[316]

Education

A major impact of the war has been on Iraq's education system. Once heralded as one of the best in the region, it has been devastated by decades of sanction and war. Investment in education has decreased significantly over 30 years. The impact of the sanctions led large numbers of middle-class, including teachers and professors, to emigrate abroad. Throughout the 1990s, hundreds of thousands of students were forced to drop out of school to find work to support their families. As Munson notes:

> "In 1995 alone, 150,000 students dropped out of classes, forced to stay at home or find work to help their families. Falling standards of living, increasingly expensive school supplies, and the newly required school tuition all contributed to plummeting enrolment. Literacy rates dropped from 67 percent in 1980 to roughly 57 percent in 2001. Young Iraqis were poorly prepared for the challenges of building a democratic state in the wake of the 2003 invasion."[317]

Following the invasion and the chaotic situation created, a wave of assassinations was directed towards members of the teaching staff of the different universities (at the Higher Education system) and Iraqi distinguished scientists. According to the Brussels Tribunal the number of those who were assassinated in the Iraqi Higher Education field as follows: members of the teaching staff killed since 2003 till March 2010 were more than 437-440, 149 arrested or disappeared, 75 threatened and kidnapped and 113 casualties in the administration of the Iraqi Education Sector. On top of that, sectarian factions began to play an increasing role in education and control of universities.[318] Some of the impacts of all of this are that

> One in five Iraqis between the ages of 10 and 49 cannot read or write a simple statement related to daily life. While Iraq boasted a record low illiteracy rate for the Middle East in the 1980s, illiteracy jumped to at least 20% in 2010.[319] As the Iraq Liaison for the international NGO Mercy Corps pointed out, "there are some locations-particularly rural locations-where the illiteracy rates are actually much higher. Illiteracy rates among women in some communities can be as high as 40-50%."[320]

While recent indicators have shown improvements relating to education in Iraq, the long-term impact of generations who did not receive schooling and in the destruction caused to Iraq's education system and large-scale displacement and brain drain of Iraqi teachers, professors and scientists will have long-term impacts on the country.

Health

Prior to the 1990s Iraq was seen as having one of the best health care systems in the region. Doctors were highly respected. Medical education in Iraq was considered to be perhaps the best in the Arab world. Sanctions and war, however, have devastated Iraq's health infrastructure and capabilities on several levels. Sanctions led to the destruction of basic health capabilities and infrastructure, including sewage and water treatment, emigration of Iraqi doctors and medical staff abroad, and an increase in disease previously under control. Child mortality increased dramatically. The violence which broke out in 2003, however, saw a new phenomenon: the targeting, kidnapping and killing of Iraqi physicians. The Brookings Institute Index figures below are telling:

Doctors in Iraq[321]

Iraqui Physicians Registered Before the 2003 invasion	34,000
Iraqui Physicians Who:	
Have left Iraq since the 2003 invasion	20,000 (estimate)
Returned to Iraq in 2007	200
Returned to Iraq in 2008	1,000
Returned to Iraq in 2009 (thru April)	325
Number of Physicians in Iraq (December 2008)	16,000
Iraqi Physicians murdered since 2008 invasion	2,000
Iraqi Physicians kidnapped	250
Average salary of an Iraqi Physician	7.5 million Iraqi dinars (≈$5,100) per year
Annual graduates from Iraqi Medical Schools	2,250
Percentage of Above that will work outside Irak	20%

NOTE: Numbers are estimates

In a report on the impact of the war on the health of women and children in Iraq, Jane Savege has developed a diagram showing the links and also health and social impacts of the war:

How conflict affects health[322]
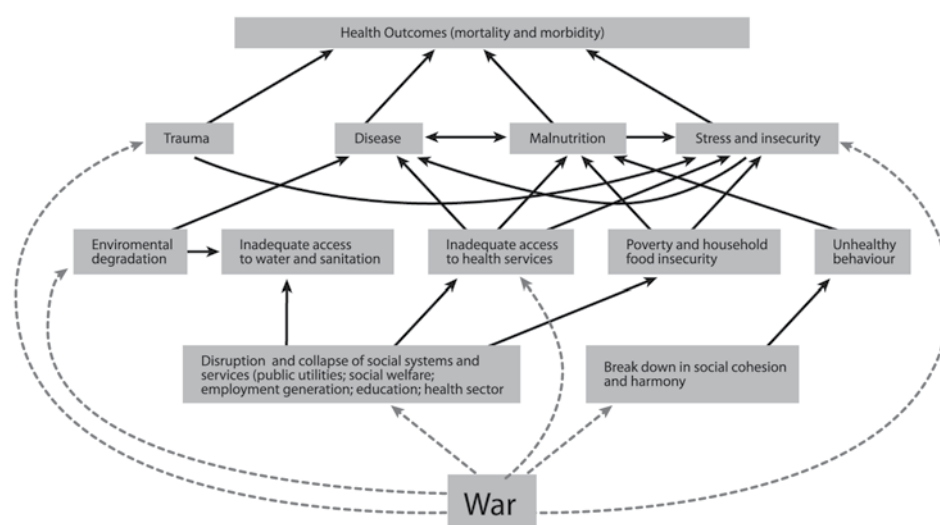
Trauma and the impact of long-term stress and insecurity often have lasting impacts on individuals performance, health and social relations in a society.

Housing

Forced displacement and dislocation brought about from the violence have also created a significant trend of increasing urbanisation and migration from rural areas to cities. This is placing increased pressure on urban services. 13% of households in Iraq have more than 10 occupants, while 57% of the population in cities is estimated to live in slum-like conditions.[323]

Cultural Impact & Drivers of War and Violence

Almost every society in the world has aspects of 'cultural violence': ideas, messages and belief systems which normalize and legitimize or celebrate the use of violence. Iraq has had a long history of violence in its political system. Iraqi history books and monuments often glorify and celebrate the countries wars. Under Saddam Hussein many monuments and statues were erected to celebrate war. The role of the military as a national institution was recognized and legitimized by many. Today, most people under 30 in Iraq have never known what it's like to live in a country not at war. Enemy images, stereotypes, and demonization of the other have been wide-spread in media and in daily experience. At the same time, many Iraqis pride themselves on their country's rich and diverse history. Iraq's multi-culturalism is seen by many as a defining aspect of the country. How the cultural impacts of the war —including deep elements of a culture of violence which could be found both before 2003 but which are strongly accentuated now— will be addressed will have long-term implications on national reconciliation and sustainable peace. Interviews indicated that there is very little being done openly / actively to address this at the moment, though strong calls from religious leaders, academics, and cultural figures to end sectarian violence, and the general exhaustion and frustration with sectarianism many interviewees spoke of could contribute in this direction. Still: addressing deep seeded messages which legitimize violence —in society, in politics, in the home— is not easy, and takes long-term consistent work, education, awareness raising, and transformation of norms and values over time.

The impact of regional powers, neighbouring countries
Section entirely developed by Sawsan al-Assaf, SfP Reseacher

As a result of the occupation, the dismantling of the Iraqi armed and security forces, the security In Iraq was lost and chaos prevailed. The US and coalition forces did nothing to stop the trading of arms in the streets, failed to impose security or put an end to the chaos and the looting that ensued. This situation was not treated wisely by the occupying forces which was only concerned about it is own security. Gradually and year after year this situation worsened. Kidnapping, street assassinations, looting, raping and political liquidations were all features of Iraq between 2003 and 2008. In the meantime all the Iraqi government that was established since 2003 failed to take any effective measure in restoring security and order. In fact these governments encouraged this chaos as it participated in it in order to liquidate any opposition that might arise. In 2005 it was discovered that the Ministry of Interior and that of Defence were using their forces to intimidate, terrorise and torture people only because they had different opinion. Later on in, 2006, it was revealed that the two above mentioned ministries were only employing the armed militia that were loyal to parties that represented the minister in their forces. On top of that, as the Iraqi borders were left unwatched and the regional interests in taking advantage of the Iraqi weakness, Iraq became a battle ground for the armed militia that came from abroad. While states like Iran and Syria, as well as al-Qaeda, chose to fight the US forces in Iraq taking advantage of its vulnerability.[324]

While the other neighbouring countries, Turkey, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait were interfering in Iraq to keep their strategic advantages especially the economics one. Sawsan Al-Assaf has compiled the following tables (1-6) that shows the advantages, strategies and the effect of the US presence in Iraq on the interests of six of Iraq's neighbour's states. The tables also show how the Iraqi government should do to grapple with the nature of Iraq's relations with the region. The policies of the successive Iraqi governments towards the neighbouring states are still following the same pattern: close ties with Iran, tense relations with Saudi Arabia and Syria, neutral with Turkey and Jordan. Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmedinezhad, in anticipating the formation of a loyal new Iraqi government and to show his confidence that it will not change its good relations with Iran, firmly assured his allies in

Syria that Iraq is part of the crescent that opposes and resists US policy in the region.
As for relations with Kuwait, those will be decided by the latter's position on the never-ending reparations Iraq pays the country.[325] As well ass the Kuwaiti's continous provocation to Iraq, the insistence to build Jaber Port is a new example.

Country	Influence / Relation
Syria	• Despite the fact that Syria's ability to influence the balance of power in the middle East is restricted by its limited military capacities, weak training and shortage of equipments, Syria felt the danger of a weak Iraq and the US hostile designs as it was regarded as a member of the axis of evil. • Also feared the symptoms of disintegration that hit the Iraqi society as the Syrian society is also composed of different religions, sects and nationalities. • Accommodated members of the old Baathist Iraqi regime and supported them to act as opposition to the new regime. • It was accused of facilitating the infiltration of fighters into Iraq. • Supported the Palestinian armed resistance groups and Hezbollah in order to show Israel and the US the influence it has in the region. • The Syrian economy depends to a large extend on its trade with Iraq. • Syrian security and regional power depends on a stable Iraq and a friendly Iran
Jordan	• The fear of the increasing power of Shiism in Iraq, and the increase in the activities of terrorist-fanatic Islamic organizations • Fully supporting the US invasion of Iraq and domination of it is politics as they felt the new Iraqi government is unable to do that. • Accommodating a very big Iraqi community, mostly affluent families, this had both positive and negative impact on the Jordanian economy. • Because of the heavy dependence of the Jordanian economy on Iraqi Oil and trade with Iraq the Jordanian government prefers to see a strong central government in Iraq friendly to Jordan. This explains the Jordanian tendency to support the decisions of Iraqi government.
Turkey	• Turkey is neither happy about the increasing Kurdish influence in northern Iraq, nor about the increasing influence of the Islamic trends which runs against its secular values. • It also feels uneasy about the increasing Iranian influence in Iraq and the region. • Turkey is following three prongs strategy; a- weakening the Kurdish ambitions. b- Supporting the Sunni attempts to play a bigger role in Iraqi politics. c- Strengthening the establishment of a balanced central government. • Turkey is using its regional influence to convince the US and the west of its indispensible role in the region as a step to get admitted to EU and to be accredited by it to be its main representative and mediator in the region. • It is also trying to balance the increasing Iranian influence in the region.
Iran	• Iran was rated as a leading member in the axis of evil and was threatened together with Syria by the US to be the next step after Iraq, despite the fact that Iran was very pleased to see the strong regime of Saddam Husain falling. • Iran was more pleased to see the Shia that was until 2003 living in Iran dominated Iraqi politics. • It was glad to see the American forces in Iraq were falling in the Iraqi quagmire. Thus it supported all armed activities against the US forces in Iraq to keep Iraq unstable in the region. • Iran strategy is to keep Iraq a one united but weak state in which it has a dominating influence. • Presenting itself as the major regional power that could decide the destiny of Iraq. It even tried to make the US negotiate with her over Iraq. All this was done with the view of alienating US threats to its Atomic Nuclear program. • Fighting any attempt to decrease the influence and domination of the present Shia pro-Iran political parties over Iraqi politics. It is concerned about American attempts to support the establishment of a secular government in Iraq with balanced participation of the Sunnis. • Keeping Iraq as the (battle ground) with US in order to divert its attention from Iran. This is what Zabigniew Brzezinski expressed when he said:"On Iraq, we're prepared to negotiate with the Iranians, more or less on the basis of symmetry, without special preconditions, because we both recognize we have a stake in finding some common approach". (Cite in Charlie Rose, Ibid) • Iran does not encourage the separation of the Iraqi Kurds. The fear that such a move could encourage its own Kurds to ask for the same especially in sectarian violence. • Iran focused on religious leaders to run the Iraqi political system.

Arabia Saudi	• Saudi Arabia fears the establishment of a Shia state or a state totally dominated by the Shia community and supported by Iran. • It also fears the increasing Iranian influence in the area and Iraq in particular. • The third fear is the freedom of action which some extremists Islamic organizations such as al-Qaeda have had in Iraq since 2003 it fears that the activities could easily spread in Saudi Arabia. • Keeping its domination over OPEC and the oil market. • Having a tense relation with the Iraqi government, mostly for sectarian reasons on the part of both sides. According to the report of al-Jazeera Studies Centre in Jan. 2010 (Saudi Arabia always had doubts and suspicions about al-Maliki's personality and the policy of his government. It accused al-Maliki of failing to keep to his words and promises to initiate a national reconciliation steps in Iraq. However, the Iraqi government accused Saudi Arabia of not interacting with the desire of the Iraqi government to develope the Iraqi-Saudi relations. (Basil Hussein, report; Iraq before the elections, al-Jazeera Studies Centre, 7-1-2010. www.aljazeera.net • Supporting the Sunni political parties and personalities to enable them to match the Shia influence. • Fighting the increasing Iranian influence in the region even if that meant sending its army to Yemen to fight the al-Hothi tribe (insurgency). • Accused of supporting Sunni resistance inside Iraq.
Kuwait	• Kuwait fears most a strong and powerful Iraqi neighbour. Especially after the 1990 experience. • It also it wants to keep the gains (geographical and financial) it made from Iraq. • It fully supported and facilitated the occupation of Iraq. • Accused of encouraging and financing activities to keep Iraq a destabilized Iraq. • Continued to receive reparation from Iraq to weaken the Iraqi economy. • Opposing any attempt to establish a strong and stable central government or effective armed forces in Iraq. • Supporting a long term US presence and domination in Iraq.

PART 3

CUMULATIVE IMPACT AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The aim of the Cumulative Impact and Needs Assessment (CINA) was to invite a broad range of perspectives and insights into peacebuilding efforts and engagements in Iraq, to:

1. **Map & Identify**:
   * *who* is involved in peacebuilding work in Iraq
   * *what* is being done for peacebuilding in Iraq
   * *how* it is being done; and
   * *what changes* are being achieved

2. **To Evaluate & Assess**:
   * the impact and effectiveness of peacebuilding work in Iraq
   * strengths, challenges, opportunities and threats.
   * recommendations and directions for improving peacebuilding efforts in Iraq

This should be seen as —at most— an initial *preliminary* effort to implement this work in Iraq. Much more —and a much more substantial process fully engaging with all relevant stakeholders and enabling a much more interactive and participatory process— is needed. It is hoped, however, that the current CINA can contribute to strengthening peacebuilding work in Iraq by:

1. Drawing key lessons from current and past engagements;
2. Raising the visibility and understanding of this work amongst both national and international organisations and donors
3. Identifying practical options and measures for improved peacebuilding practice —addressing root causes, transforming conflicts, and preventing violence— in Iraq

Below is a brief presentation of *types* of work being done in peacebuilding as well as short assessments of each. This is by no means comprehensive but is instead an identification of 'types' of projects and peace work made visible through the *SfP* interviews. Further work would need to be done to more rigorously assess the *relevance, appropriateness, impact and sustainability* of work in these areas. While important, this was outside the capability of the *SfP* project. This section is then followed by identification of the types of change these programmes are trying to bring about, as identified by interviewees, and the *programme logic* or *theories* behind them. This is followed by an *evaluation* of peacebuilding programmes in Iraq and identification of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.[326]

What do we mean by Peacebuilding work in Iraq?

Interviews identified 10 key 'fields' of peacebuilding work in Iraq. This included efforts, programmes, initiatives and specific actions and interventions which:

1. Address or assist parties in **addressing key conflict issues and root causes** and drivers of conflict in Iraq *and / or* generate effective processes and engagements for addressing them;

2. Generate **practical measures and specific solutions** —seen as legitimate and mutually acceptable to all parties / stakeholders involved— and assist parties and actors in Iraq in developing effective solutions and proposals to conflict issues;

3. Improve **understanding and analysis** of key conflict issues, peacebuilding options, strategies and implementation, and what can be done to address and transform conflicts in Iraq;

4. **Improve relations between conflict parties / communities** and their ability to deal with conflicts effectively without the use of violence; including facilitation and enabling of dialogue processes, joint problem solving for, and work to overcome fears, antagonisms, enemy images, demonization, stereotypes and hatred of the other;

5. R**educe violence-escalating behaviours, statements and triggers** including speeches and statements by political, religious, tribal, community, cultural, media and other leaders which may contribute to demonization of the other and escalation of violent behaviour / attacks, or behaviour by armed groups and security / police / military forces which may trigger violence;

6. **End / prevent the outbreak or occurrence of violence in specific instances**, communities, regions and across the country; and **strengthen communities' / key actors' abilities to actively resist escalation of violence** and take concrete measures to prevent its occurrence;

7. **Strengthen / build effective conflict handling, peacebuilding and violence prevention capabilities and** *infrastructure* **for peace (I4P)** *in* **Iraq**. This includes working with key actors, institutions, social, religious, traditional and other leaders which hold trust and authority for dealing with conflict issues as well as strengthening civil society peacebuilding capabilities. It can be at the broad level of the population and at the *targeted* level of specific institutions, actors, agencies (political parties & leaders, government agencies and institutions, media, religious leaders, unions, tribal leaders, youth, men and women, ex-combatants, civil society). It can also involve establishment or strengthening of institutions/ capabilities at the community, regional and national levels to identify and address conflicts *before* they escalate —putting in place standing capabilities and mandated and trained expertise.

8. **Catalyze / raise / mobilize support and engagement for peace and to resist provocations to violence** amongst key sectors, institutions, communities and the broader population. This also involves building / strengthening people's belief that peace and an end to violence is *possible* and that there are things they can do to achieve it.

9. Improve people's **security and sense of security** and freedom from threat / reality of violence and attack

10. Work with victims and survivors of violence, those who have carried out violence, and the broader community to promote **reconciliation and healing** in a way that addresses the needs of all community members and strengthens foundations for sustainable and lasting peace.

As interviewees noted, there is also work which could be considered as contributing to peacebuilding in Iraq that is not carried out under the name of 'peacebuilding' and actors involved may not consciously identify it as such. This includes measures taken to:

- Strengthen functioning political and state institutions, good governance and service delivery trusted and seen as legitimate by the population;
- Re-establish and improve the rule of law, protection of human rights and security for all;
- Improve the economy and generate employment opportunities, development, and reconstruction and recovery;

All of these are critical to address key drivers and factors of conflict in Iraq and to contribute to creating an environment conducive for sustainable peace. Action by religious, tribal and political leaders and others to prevent sectarian violence or facilitate negotiation and addressing of conflict issues may also not be identified as 'peacebuilding' by those doing it, but directly contributes as such.

Peacemaking, Peacekeeping, Peacebuilding
Within the CINA, focus was placed on all three dimensions of peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, with understanding of these terms customized for the context in Iraq. In addition to *peacebuilding* (above) *peacemaking* was taken to include measures by actors at all levels of society —from political to religious and tribal leaders or civil society initiatives— to generate practical processes and agreements to address conflict issues. This includes a wide-range of dialogue, negotiation, and mediation. *Peacekeeping* includes specific measures and interventions to prevent the outbreak of violence and mitigate instances which do occur. While this may be carried out by armed / security forces, just as often in Iraq it has been done by religious leaders, tribal leaders, political leaders, civil society organisations, media and citizens.

Different 'Levels'
As in most conflict contexts, few efforts in Iraq are targeted at the national level —beyond political processes and negotiations aimed at addressing power-sharing and key conflict issues. Most peacebuilding measures and interventions are targeted / local —addressing (1) specific issues / incidents of conflict (eg. Kirkuk, outbreaks of violence between different communities); or (2) focusing on building capacity with specific actors / institutions.

Broadening our Understanding: Two Quotes on Peacebuilding

"Peacebuilding involves a full range of approaches, processes, and stages needed for transformation toward more sustainable, peaceful relationships and governance modes and structures. Peacebuilding includes building legal and human rights institutions as well as fair and effective governance and dispute resolution processes and systems. To be effective, peacebuilding activities require careful and participatory planning, coordination among various efforts, and sustained commitments by both local and donor partners. To summarize a construction metaphor used by Lederach, *peacebuilding* involves a long-term commitment to a *process* that includes investment, gathering of resources and materials, architecture and planning, coordination of resources and labour, laying solid foundations, construction of walls and roofs, finish work and ongoing maintenance. Lederach also emphasizes that peacebuilding centrally involves the transformation of relationships. «Sustainable reconciliation» requires both structural and relational transformations." [327]
Catherine Morris, *What is Peacebuilding? One Definition*

"Peacebuilding requires peace architecture: a clear and compelling vision of the peace one wants to create, a comprehensive assessment of what is needed to realize this peace, a coherent plan, and an effective implementation of that plan." [328]
Luc Reychler

Who's involved in Peacebuilding work in Iraq?

When asked to map / identify actors involved in peacebuilding and working to address conflicts in Iraq interviewees mentioned:

- Religious Leaders
- Politicians
- Tribal Leaders
- Citizens
- Businesses
- NGOs & Civic Alliances
- International / Foreign Organisations
- Ex-Combatants
- Academics / Analysts
- Donors

Engagement by Sector

Engagement by sector is for the most part *limited*. While *individuals* or *individual organisations* may work in, carry out, or support peacebuilding, there is no systematic engagement by any of these sectors 'as a whole' in peacebuilding. In fact, in all the sectors identified by interviewees, it was recognized that there was not broad-based consensus or recognition of the importance of working in peacebuilding. In almost all sectors, specific engagements, behaviours and speeches could also be identified which directly contributed to increasing sectarian tensions and violence in Iraq. Notably: **peacebuilding** itself —while in its substance an aspiration for many / most people in Iraq— remains a term that is little understood and in many cases mistrusted. In each sector those involved in / actively working on peacebuilding represents a *small minority*.

Scale of Engagement

The scale of engagement in peacebuilding is **small** in relation to (i) the size of the Iraqi population; (ii) engagement in other key sectors (such as reconstruction, rehabilitation, strengthening state institutions); and, most importantly, (iii) the *scale of the challenge* faced in Iraq in conflicts and violence.[329] In total, there are **very few** organisations / individuals across the country actively involved in peacebuilding programmes and efforts. Many organisations addressing key conflict issues / drivers are also not trained in / familiar with conflict sensitive approaches or how their work might contribute to or be strengthened by peacebuilding. While their contributions in some cases —and in addressing specific conflict situations— may be critical, the necessary engagement in and support for peacebuilding to reach the level of *strategic impact* on the conflict in Iraq has not been reached.

Most Cited in the Interviews

Though many organisations have carried out or supported programs, activities and interventions in peacebuilding in Iraq only 4 national and 11 international organisations were cited by 10 or more interviewees (out of 100) when asked to identify organisations working in peacebuilding. This does not mean that other organisations are not doing *highly important* or effective work. In some cases, it may relate to the fact that, while many / most organisations in Iraq work locally or in their region, some donors / international organisations have the opportunity (1) to work in more parts of the country; and or (2) to work with a range of partners and organisations.[330] It also reflects the fact that many international organisations may work with or know a limited number of local / national organisations in Iraq. This does not necessarily reflect the breadth of organisations in Iraq but more the extent of awareness of Iraqi peacebuilding measures and efforts. The organisations included:

Iraqi Organisations	Al-Mesalla, LAONF, Al Amal Association, Bustan Association for Children's Education
International Organisations	Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR), United States Institute for Peace (USIP), Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), NOVA, Un Ponte Per, Columbia University, Relief International, Mercy Corps, UNAMI, UNOPS, International Crisis Group (ICG). Initiatives by the Office of the University of Chicago and the Iraq Helsinki Project were also cited.

What's being done in Peacebuilding in Iraq?

Types of Activities

There are a range of peacebuilding activities being carried out in Iraq, or internationally to support peacebuilding efforts in Iraq. Twenty-four different types of activities cited in the interviews included:

1. Negotiation & Mediation Processes
2. Dialogue Processes
3. Public Speeches and Interventions
4. Training Programmes & Capacity Building
5. Peace Education in Schools & Universities
6. Workshops
7. Seminars
8. Round Tables
9. Conferences
10. Research
11. Publications
12. Conflict Analysis and Needs Assessments
13. Policy Advocacy & Lobbying
14. Public Awareness Raising Activities & Campaigns
15. Public Demonstrations
16. Nonviolent Direct Action
17. Use of Visual Arts (posters, banners, etc.)
18. Commercials & TV Ads/ Messages Promoting Peace
19. Media Support & Training
20. Networking & Coordination
21. Trauma counselling and work with Victims & Survivors
22. International Awareness Raising & Solidarity Actions
23. Treaties & Regional Engagement
24. Funding

While a broad *range* of engagements and types of peacebuilding activities was cited, it should be noted that many people, both those carrying them out and other sectors (politicians, journalists, analysts and many NGO workers themselves) questioned what *impact* they are having and the *scale* of that impact. Several initiatives were identified as highly important to addressing key conflict issues (such as facilitated negotiations on the status of Kirkuk), though even there there were questions about the quality and effectiveness of how these interventions are being carried out. Many also noted that while a range of peacebuilding activities might have impact on those directly involved, they often failed to have broader impact on group behaviour, social dynamics, or institutional reform / change. The question of to what extent the majority of Iraqis —either nationally or in an area directly affected / targeted by these programmes— are aware that they exist or are taking place was also raised by many. While this is not as relevant necessarily for quiet dialogue or mediation projects aimed at engaging a small number of actors to address a specific

conflict, it is relevant for projects which may be aiming at broad-based awareness raising or outreach to the wider public. At the same time, however, it is important to note that peacebuilding projects in Iraq have been working under a very difficult context. The scale and extent of violence and demonization of the other, including targeting of those who reached out across sectarian lines, made many peacebuilding efforts and projects difficult. In this context, many national and international interviewees noted with admiration and appreciation positive achievements which have been made. In several cases, interventions by trusted tribal and religious leaders have directly contributed to resolving disputes which otherwise could have led to violence. Programmes in schools have reported significant changes in attitudes and group behaviour of youth and children involved. Training programmes have often brought about not only changes in *skills* but also in *behaviours* of youth, judges, NGO workers, community leaders, journalists and others who have been trained. Most NGOs and those working on the ground who was interviewed by *SfP* could all point to some positive successes and achievements of peacebuilding or peace support efforts. A challenge identified by all, however, is how to *scale* these up to the levels which may be needed, and how to *sustain* achievements over time.

Negotiation & Mediation Processes (1)

Interviewees cited a number of different negotiation and mediation processes which they were aware of in Iraq. This covers activities from negotiations between political parties on establishment of the government and power sharing to negotiations over disputed territories and key conflict issues. Negotiations and Mediation processes have taken place primarily in Iraq, though some projects have sought to bring key leaders outside of Iraq.[331] Only a few such projects have been sustained over time. Those involved primarily include political parties but several processes aim to include key stakeholders and tribal, religious and other leaders. Many negotiations take place within the context of domestic political processes to address key local and national issues. Several interviewees noted that they would question whether this was peacebuilding or simply supporting processes / negotiations to handle issues in dispute with the aim of achieving maximum interests of each party and not necessarily searching for mutually beneficial outcomes or agreements to support national reconciliation and the good of the country. In some cases, such as negotiations over Kirkuk, there is clearly direct effort to use the process of negotiations to address a critical conflict issue and bring about a mutually acceptable outcome for all parties. While most international experts —including some of those directly involved in the negotiations— praised these measures, there was a mix of responses from Iraqis interviewed, ranging from highly appreciative / supporting to highly sceptical / critical.

Assessment: Effective processes of negotiation and mediation can provide a key mechanism for addressing conflict issues and preventing violence. The challenges, however, are often significant. A number of Iraqi interviewees questioned the sincerity, commitment and authenticity of engagement in negotiations by those taking part. One Iraqi expert interviewed noted 'effective engagement in negotiation and mediation processes in Iraq requires a high-level of commitment by the parties'. At the same time, from the background of international and community-based experiences in negotiation and mediation, it could be said that the *process* itself should create / foster /facilitate the development of that commitment by participants. It won't necessarily be there from the start. If mediators / facilitators are involved, it is essential that they be trusted by those involved in addressing the conflict —or earn that trust through the process. Evaluation of lessons learned in these processes to-date to identify strengths, challenges, gaps and recommendations should be carried out to improve and support further initiatives in the future. It is also essential that those facilitating the negotiations be well prepared, skilled, and able to apply appropriate methodologies and engagement for the context in Iraq. Many interviewed had criticisms regarding the manner in which negotiations over Kirkuk have been handled, and questioned the capability and effectiveness of UNAMI in its role. In order to increase likelihood of success, key gaps and shortcomings should be identified and addressed to improve the effectiveness of negotiations and mediation processes. External actors should also ensure that their engagement is wanted, and, if so, that it is carried out in a way that

is appropriate for the culture and context in Iraq. Particular emphasis should be given to drawing on traditions for peaceful resolution and mediation of conflicts in Iraqi and in both Shia and Sunni Islam as well as Christianity —drawing upon the cultures and traditions of the people in Iraq as well as best practice internationally.

Dialogue Processes (2)

Dialogue processes have been introduced by a number of national and international organisations to bring together key stakeholders and actors involved in addressing issues of local or national importance and to create processes to bring out key viewpoints and issues, explore options, and generate proposals and recommendations. The work of the United States Institute for Peace and its community discussions on religion and peacemaking and its national dialogue project were cited. At a local level several processes have focused on dialogue projects between communities and engaging tribal, religious and other leaders, as well as conflict parties, to resolve issues in dispute. More often though, the focus has been on community-dialogues and dialogues with key stakeholders and social and religious leaders on 'needs assessments' for development. Inter-faith / inter-religious dialogues have been one of the main forms of dialogue engagements, working to promote cooperation across religious groups and reduce sectarian tensions. Initiatives by both Bishop Louis Sako of Kirkuk and Bishop Kasmussa and the "radio for peace" were cited in several interviews. In January 2010 religious leaders met in Denmark for what was at the time a secret meeting on the reduction of violence. Iraqi organisations have also been working to introduce dialogue projects at the neighbourhood / community level to bring people together from across different backgrounds. One local project referenced in interviews was the neighbourhood project called "Jiran" (meaning neighbourhood in Arabic), promoting communication within neighbourhoods. Dialogue processes have taken place within Iraq, locally and nationally, as well as externally. The Iraq Helsinki Project was mentioned as well as an engagement which provided important opportunity for Iraqi political leaders to meet and discuss together outside Iraq, and to exchange and share experiences with experts and politicians from other conflict areas (Northern Ireland and South Africa).

Assessment: The main value identified in dialogue processes by those who had been involved in them (either as participants or as organisers) was that they enabled stakeholders to come together and to explore and address issues, working to identify possible solutions and options. Interviews spoke of the importance to prepare properly to ensure that those participating could contribute either to introduce important perspectives on the issues or to be able to make use of the outputs of the dialogues in their work. Having participants who could bring back the results of their dialogues to their communities / parties / institutions was recognised as important.[332] Dialogue processes have also provided a way for those who may not be involved in negotiations and mediation to introduce their perspectives on key issues of local and national importance. While this was cited by a number of interviewees involved in dialogue processes, it would be important to assess *how* this actually link is made.[333] In cases where those participating in dialogue sessions are also participants in formal negotiations and mediation processes the link is clearer, but where this is not the case they link may be more assumed / hoped for on the part of organisers than actually occurring in reality. Several interviews spoke of their value in building relationships and bridges amongst participants. Significant questions were raised, however, about the extent to which these dialogues actually had impact on effecting policy or other changes on the issues they addressed. While changes might take place at the personal or inter-personal level, it was questioned whether most of these projects have contributed to or assisted *institutional change* or broader changes in inter-group behaviour *beyond* the small circles participating. It was noted that dialogue sessions were often short and follow-through in some cases did not take place. Little time was given to see how to bring back the results of dialogues and spread them further within Iraq. The *impact* of dialogue processes was often perceived to be greater by organizers than by those who took part. Those who were neither organizers nor participants were often unaware of the dialogue initiatives or their results. This is not necessarily negative as many dialogues are not intended to be public. The principle benefit identified by several participants was in enabling the sharing and exchange

of opinions and development of relations. While dialogue projects could play an important role in peacebuilding in Iraq, it is important that they be: well prepared, participants well selected, the process should be well facilitated (preferably by Iraqi facilitators with international facilitators only when requested). Many Iraqis questioned whether people in Iraq were familiar with dialogue processes as an approach to dealing with inter-personal or inter-community/group conflicts. While recognizing its value and importance, it was felt that more needed to be done to strengthen / sustain and train indigenous capabilities in Iraq, and to look within Iraqi context, culture and society for messages, values and approaches to dialogue. It was also recognized that interventions based on external assistance would most likely not last beyond the duration of that external engagement. Significant effort should therefore be placed on support, strengthening and building up the capability of Iraqi organisations and institutions to be able to facilitate multi-stakeholder dialogues to bring together key actors, institutions and relevant stakeholders when addressing conflict issues. The resources, lessons learned and materials available from the Democratic Dialogue Network should be openly shared and made more available to those working in this field in Iraq.[334]

Public Speeches and Interventions (3)

Throughout the conflicts and violence in Iraq since 2003 many religious, tribal, community and other leaders have spoken out against violence and called for unity. In the immediate aftermath of the invasion many religious leaders in particular called upon Iraqis to remain united and to prevent the outbreak of *fitna* (strife) between Iraq's religious and national communities.[335] Several interviewees from across Iraq spoke of calls by Ayatollah Al Sistani, and joint efforts across many of Iraq's faiths in 2003 to prevent the rise of sectarian violence. Several union members and leaders also played active roles in calling upon members not to support the rise of sectarian violence and discrimination (it is important to note however that in many cases this was not successful. Extensive violence was witnessed in 2004 – 2007 in several professional associations where people of different sectarian backgrounds were targeted and driven out of professional associations). Following the elections in 2010 and during the extended process of negotiations to form a government, prominent figures again played important roles in calling for calm and to prevent a return to sectarian violence. Academics, journalists, and especially NGOs such as LAONF and others spoke out against violence, and called upon all Iraqis to promote peace and resist provocations. Beyond statements and public declarations, however, at key periods in the conflict religious leaders and others played important roles in *intervening* to prevent specific acts of violence. While these were often overlooked —given the violence of the Occupation and the scale of sectarian violence and killings which swept across the country— they remain an important legacy for peacebuilding and healing / transcending sectarian divides. In several cases they played a key role in stopping sectarian violence at local levels. A more concerted national effort could help to build upon these achievements and address the critical need for healing, national reconciliation, and engagement of all Iraqi actors in peacebuilding and reconciliation.

Assessment: Most of these initiatives and actions came directly from the parties themselves. This has been a key factor to what success they had. In most cases they were not part of NGO or donor supported activities but are the result of key stakeholders and citizens in Iraq recognizing the dangers of sectarian violence and working to prevent it. In the case of networks such as LAONF and other Iraqi organisations who have taken it as their role / purpose to promote nonviolence and support peacebuilding, either broadly, or in specific situations, while they may receive limited external support their actions are first and foremost motivated by an authentic commitment to end violence in Iraq and support sustainable peace. For this reason, and because of the standing and stature of those delivering the statements, they often carry greater weight and legitimacy with the population. At the same time: a number of interviewees pointed out that very few of these statements reach out across sectarian lines and that there are few figures who have standing across different communities. Inter-faith initiatives have been important for facilitating dialogue across different faiths, but there is still not enough joint visible action and calls to prevent violence

and targeting of different communities. Still, a number of prominent individuals were identified whose contributions it was felt have played a key role at times in reigning in violence and preventing further escalation. While several projects have engaged with religious, tribal and other leaders (see below), it was felt that significantly more efforts could be done to support prominent figures and trusted leaders within communities and nationally to speak out for national peace and reconciliation and against violence, encouraging peacebuilding and peacemaking efforts at all levels of society. Stories of heroic actions and initiatives by Iraqis of all backgrounds to prevent violence and sectarianism should also be collected and promoted. Efforts to strengthen leadership and public interventions and concrete actions to foster national reconciliation and peacebuilding should be prioritized. Many Iraqis are tired of sectarian violence and there is a potential (and need) to foster alternatives which can assist Iraqis in addressing the major issues and challenges facing the country.

Training Programmes & Capacity Building (4)

Training programmes and capacity building have been one of the main form of engagement in peacebuilding for many organisation, both Iraqi and internationally, and amongst the most cited by interviewees when asked to list examples of work being done in peacebuilding. NCCI notes that 'local organizations have come to heavily rely on INGOs for training and skills development.'[336] According to interviews, however, since 2009 in particular Iraqi organisations have taken an increasing role in provision of trainings. Training programmes have targeted a wide-range of individuals from political leaders and government officials to judges, journalists, academics, military, police, NGOs, traditional leaders, youth, unions, women's organisations and others. They have been carried out by a wide range of actors, including the UN, the Iraqi Government, national and international NGOs, UN agencies, and universities. Training programmes have focused either on (i) developing / strengthening key skills, knowledge and capabilities for peacebuilding and working with conflicts (eg. conflict analysis training, mediation and negotiation trainings, inter-religious/inter-faith dialogue training programmes, training in nonviolence, training in conflict-sensitive or peace journalism); and / or (ii) strengthening professional capabilities in the sectors addressed: such as improved policing, better quality functioning of police services, improved functioning of the judiciary, and protection of human rights, etc. In the immediate post-invasion period most trainings were carried out in neighbouring countries in the region or in Europe and the United States. Northern Iraq is also often used as a location for trainings as it is seen as having a better security situation.

Assessment: With very few exceptions most training programmes were *highly criticized* by interviewees —both Iraqi and international.[337] Most programmes were of short duration. In many cases they were not actually *trainings*— developing participants' practical skills, capabilities and knowledge —but a series of talks and lectures (possibly, though not necessarily, raising knowledge/awareness). Initially, many were carried out by trainers with little or no background or experience in Iraq and who did not speak the languages of the country, and therefore had to use translators.[338] In many cases, the translators may not have been familiar with the terms / concepts involved, and there was additional loss of value / impact through poor quality translation. Participants were often brought to Amman for programmes, and this itself was criticized by many organisations who questioned the value and impact these trips had on actually improving performance or peacebuilding work in Iraq.[339] A gap noted here is one that affects trainings in many parts of the world: the ability of participants to effectively utilize what they have learned in their contexts and organisations *after* the trainings are completed. Frequently, the same participants would be brought and take part in several different programmes provided by different organisations, without the organisations being aware of this. There was in general little or no communication or coordination between different organisations carrying out training to practically see how to compliment and support each other's efforts or how to target their engagements to best support the building of effective capacity in Iraq.[340] Participant selection was often ad hoc and preparation limited. Few programmes included any assessment of skills / capabilities learned or follow-up to evaluate whether participants used skills gained in their work or in peacebuilding / conflict interventions.[341] While the context in Iraq for most periods since

2003 would have made this difficult in many cases, interviewees cited that it had for the most part not even been thought of. A favourite type of programme throughout most of the 8 years since the invasion was 'Training of Trainers'. Most of these programmes were carried out at a very basic level, and the ability of those trained to then give training was questioned. Few programmes consistently and seriously followed through over time to build / support meaningful capabilities amongst those trained. When Iraqi organisations were asked to name capable Iraqi trainers they were able to name several, however even these individuals spoke of a desire for much better quality and support to improve their peacebuilding training skills. On the whole, trainings were often poorly organised and hastily delivered and with limited impact.

While the shortcomings and gaps are important to identify —in order to learn from them and to ensure future programmes are better conceived, designed, developed and implemented— it is also important to identify what impact good quality trainings did achieve. In those cases where they were well carried out interviewees cited the key importance of well delivered trainings and capacity building programmes to helping organisations / practitioners / policy makers and others in gaining key skills and capabilities which they otherwise lacked. For many, training programmes became their first point of entry into the field, and helped them become aware that 'peacebuilding' was possible. The opportunity to learn from different approaches and experiences, and to come together with others in Iraq trying to find alternative ways of dealing with conflicts and to reduce / end the violence and sectarian division in the country was also cited by many as empowering. Those participants who did take part in good programmes and who had proactive interest in the issues addressed have often benefitted significantly and are amongst leading contributors working in peacebuilding in Iraq today. On the whole though, interviewees suggest that a tremendous amount of money and resources was wasted on poorly done programmes which didn't reach the impact they could have had they been properly prepared or better implemented and followed through. It was also noted that many organisations carried out 'trainings' because of a lack of knowledge of what else to do. The serious gaps in most of these trainings —the lack of proper preparation, and the absence in most cases of follow-through and linking *trainings* to *opportunities for implementation*— significantly reduced the potential benefit which could have been achieved.

A Note on Tips for Improving Training Going Forward

A model for thinking about critical elements involved in training proposed by the *SfP* project for thinking about future trainings in Iraq draws attention to the need for thorough:

- Capacity *Identification*: Before developing further training programmes organisations should carry out analysis of what skills, capabilities and competencies already exist. There are many highly capable / qualified individuals and organisations in Iraq —sometimes more so than external 'experts'. Internal Iraqi expertise should be recognized and built upon.

- Capacity *Needs Analysis*: Iraqis identified that, with few exceptions, the content, aims and methods of training programmes were normally decided by external experts and organisations, often with little or no previous analysis of what capabilities were needed. Very few programmes in any way attempted to carry out a *needs analysis* or *assessment* to identify: given the context and situation in Iraq or the specific locality and sector being addressed, the culture(s) of participants, their aspirations, existing capabilities, etc. what capacities should be developed / strengthened? In order to ensure trainings are addressing the right needs, and to strengthen ownership and empowerment, organisations involved in training should proactively include stakeholders and Iraqi experts, as well as local communities, local and national authorities, etc. in analysing what capabilities are needed that training should address.

- Capacity Development & Strengthening: This is essentially what training programmes are about —to develop and train participants in skills, tools, and knowledge to grow,

improve or strengthen competencies. Organisations involved in training in Iraq should evaluate —together with stakeholders, trainers and those who've been trained— past programmes to identify lessons learned and see: which methodologies work well, what can be learned from different training formats, content and approaches, and how to improve the quality and *delivery* of trainings.

- *Capacity Evaluation & Certification*: Developing *capabilities* is not simply about sitting in a room or having gone through a programme. To ensure that participants have actually gained the competencies covered in a programme, trainings need to develop ways of *evaluating* participants. This can be challenging for short-term 1 – 2 day programmes (though even then it is still possible). Particularly for trainings which are carried out over several days or weeks, or programmes which include multiple training sessions with the same participants, increased focus should be placed on *evaluating* participants on the skills, tools and knowledge covered in the programmes to see to what extent they've actually acquired them.

- Capacity *Utilization*: This is the actual purpose for which training programmes are held: for participants to gain skills and capabilities they can use effectively to improve their work / address a situation. Many factors can affect utilization, including:

  - Does the individual have the mandate / trust to play this role in their organisation/ community?
  - Does the individual have opportunities within their work / role / programme to actually utilize and implement skills and knowledge gained?
  - Are colleagues / bosses / employees of the individual supportive or blocking utilization of skills gained?
  - To what extent are the organisations, ministries, communities, etc. from which the participant comes open to having them use these skills?
  - Will the participant remain in their organisation, ministry, community to use the skills? High turnover, rotation, or population displacement can affect this.

Rather than just hoping or assuming that participants will be able to use the skills they have gained, organisations providing training need to work more with the local communities, organisations, etc. from which participants come, to identify the need for training in advance, and to select participants who can or who can reasonably expect in the future to be able to utilize the skills and knowledge they've gained. Programmes can also be designed to *integrate* training and utilization. This is part of many programmes and increases likelihood of participants using the capabilities they've gained.

- Capacity *Retention*: This has in part been touched above but can address both the individuals ability to retain competencies gained (if they haven't been able to use them for some time they may lose them) and organisations' / government's ability to retain the people who've been trained (if they move, find other jobs, etc, then the skills they have gained will be lost to the organisation).

Peace Education in Schools and Universities (5)

Most education projects in Iraq focused on civic or human rights education. Only a few organisations in Iraq are working on peace education as such: working to educate and train children in key values, skills, concepts and approaches of peacebuilding and working with conflicts in their daily lives. Most of the materials and curricula for these programmes have been developed by educators from abroad. Few interviewees could cite projects where real effort was made to develop appropriate texts and materials based upon Iraqi culture and context. At least from the interviews it would appear that limited focus has been given to working with Iraqi youth and teachers to develop customized materials for Iraq —though many interviewees identified this as an important area of work. Both local and international organisations spoke of working with the Ministry of Education. The importance of engaging the Ministry was seen as crucial to move beyond one-off projects and to *institutionalise*

peace education in schools in Iraq. Programmes in peace education include both provision of textbooks and materials, teacher training, and direct work in schools. Given the context in which children are growing up in Iraq and what they have lived through in recent years, many analysts and organisations highlighted the importance of systematically introducing peace education into all levels of the school system in Iraq.

Work is also being carried out with universities. A number of projects have also been implemented to introduce university courses or programmes in peace and conflict resolution. The most cited programmes were those at the Universities of Baghdad, Duhok and Kirkuk. The United Nations University for Peace in Costa Rica was given as an example of an institution that carried out a multi-year engagement to support the development of peace studies at universities in Iraq.

Assessment: While important, many interviewees spoke about the limited scale and impact of these projects, calling for a more systematic and comprehensive approach to introduce peace studies into schools and universities in Iraq. It was also noted that there appeared to be little or no cooperation or coordination between different organisations working on education projects. While cooperation with the Ministry of Education was cited, it was noted by many that there was little momentum for the Ministry to remain engaged unless approached by international actors. International actors such as USIP cited the critical importance of continued engagement from the Ministry for the projects to have success. More work should be done to work directly with students, teachers, and teachers unions, as well as with parents and the broader society, to raise awareness about the importance and value of peace education and to build a *constituency* which can mobilise and work for the promotion of peace education in Iraq. At the university level, while there have been attempts to introduce peace studies programmes, faculty and students and organisations raised significant questions about the quality of these programmes and the way in which they were implemented. Given the curriculum and quality of the education it was recognized that many graduates would lack basic skills for working in peacebuilding or the knowledge for how to implement what they have learned in practice. This, however, is also a critical short-coming in many peace studies programmes around the world. Given the situation in Iraq, however, it is important that peace studies programmes actually prepare and train people with practical skills and capabilities to address conflicts in their communities / country or the different sectors they may work in, and not only theoretical content. Support for the development of peace studies in Iraqi universities is important, but this should be consistently followed through and the quality of programmes greatly improved. A number of interviewees identified three key proposals: (1) that the content of peace studies should not only be isolated as a specific programme, but should *also* systematically be integrated into related fields, including: politics, economics, security studies, human rights, social studies, media and journalism, gender, etc. Currently, many of these disciplines, such as politics and security studies, are taught in ways that directly promote militarism and violent approaches to conflicts and fail to train / educate people in how to address conflicts effectively; (2) that more should be done to link university-based peace studies with organisations in Iraq working in peacebuilding, to improve students practical exposure to peacebuilding work and to support organisations with research and analysis which could be conducted by universities; (3) to strengthen if possible cooperation *between* different universities doing peace studies in Iraq and to create an alumni across the country of all peace graduates and improved professional association of 'peace researchers' and peace practitioners.

Workshops (6), Seminars (7), Round Tables (8), Conferences (9)

Together with training programmes, workshops, seminars, round tables and conferences are frequently organised to address key conflict issues and promote discussion and awareness raising. They are held across a breadth of issues. These primarily target political leaders, academics, students, media and NGOs.

Assessment: Academics and those involved recognized these as important opportunities

to raise awareness and discuss key issues. These can also be used to promote greater understanding, awareness and engagement on peacebuilding and to promote conflict transformation approaches in Iraq. The drawback identified by some is the limited reach they have to the Iraqi population. A benefit is that they do not require significant resources to organise, and can help as platforms / spaces to stimulate engagement.

Research (10) and Publications (11)

A number of very good publications have been carried out on key conflict issues in Iraq, including disputed territories and peacebuilding programmes working with youth, multi-culturalism, minority rights, gender and other issues. There is also an extensive body of literature analysing the war in Iraq and the Occupation, resistance to it, and the sectarian violence. Many publications have been written by individuals with little or no actual *in country* experience, though a substantive body of literature also exists produced by people who were involved in or part of the military or political occupation and administration, or working with NGOs or university projects. Less has been written by people directly working in peacebuilding in Iraq.[342] Iraqi experts are often invited to speak at conferences both inside Iraq and internationally to share their research. A number have written MAs or PhDs or had their writings published in national or international publications or on-line, but fewer books by Iraqis have been translated or published internationally. A few international organisations (USIP, ICG, Columbia University) have carried out regular research and publications addressing key conflict issues and programmes in peacebuilding. Amnesty International and several Iraqi organisations have carried out major studies and reports on the human rights situation in Iraq. The UN and EC have also conducted research on needs and challenges in Iraq.

Assessment: While a great deal has been *researched* and *published* on Iraq, there are key issues relating to: (1) who *does* the research; (2) which languages are they published in; and (3) how accessible are they (both in Iraq and internationally). There is a dearth of research which brings forward the voices and understandings of Iraqis on the conflict issues they face and how to address them from *multipartial* perspectives. A great deal has been written by international organisations and to promote or make visible their work in Iraq, while many in Iraq dealing with these issues may not know of or have access to the reports. Notably, while a number of Iraqi academics and analysts may have been aware of the reports, few cited using them. Many individuals working in NGOs were unaware that they existed or were not using them for their work. When it comes to *peace research* Iraqi analysts pointed out that it is almost non-existent in Iraq. By this they were referring to **research aimed at understanding what is being done and what can be done to strengthen and support peacebuilding and develop effective, sustainable, and mutually satisfactory outcomes to conflict issues in Iraq**. There has also been *very* little research, and even less *Iraqi-own*ed and *implemented* research to evaluate successes and gaps in peacebuilding, assess conflict issues using conflict analysis tools and methodologies, and generate peacebuilding proposals and options for policy makers and the broader public. Areas identified as potentially valuable for research included: facilitating an Iraqi-owned process across the country to carry out a multi-stakeholder, participatory conflict analysis and use that information to guide projects being done[343]; research into experiences and examples of nonviolence as well as practical 'success' stories and examples in which conflicts and critical issues were dealt with effectively and violence ended or prevented. The need to design this research to be *practically relevant* to Iraqi organisations and institutions was emphasized.

Conflict Analysis and Needs Assessments (12)

Several international organisations are carrying out or supporting Iraqi organisations to carry out conflict analysis and needs assessments. USIP, UNDP and DFID have all conducted conflict analysis as have several other organisations. The International Crisis Group and Columbia University's Center for International Conflict Cooperation have provided regular briefings. NCCI is also a good source of information on key conflict issues and factors.[344] The *Iraq Community-Based Conflict Assessments*, conducted by Iraqi 'conflict assessment

facilitators' (CAFs) working on the 'Iraq Community-Based Conflict Mitigation Program' (ICCM, also known as *Nahwa Al-Salaam*) is particularly worth noting. This has been carried out as part of the CCA/UNDAF process under the guidance of the Inter-Agency Information and Analysis Unit (IAU), aimed at informing a CCA *pre-analyzing* phase.[345] UNOPS did a conflict assessment through local NGOs in the North. Organisations working on humanitarian, development and reconstruction and recovery projects often carry out various levels of assessment. Several interviewees pointed out, however, that many projects are carried out with little or no proper assessment taking place. In the majority of cases, those assessments which are conducted are carried out very rapidly, and with little verification. There is also little or no link often between the *analysis* and *assessments* done and the development of planning, projects and interventions to address issues identified. Later analysis is often not done to see if the outcomes desired were achieved.[346] A number of interviewees spoke of the need to strengthen the capabilities of Iraqi researchers and research institutions to carry out conflict analysis. The *Iraq Community-Based Conflict Assessments* project mentioned above seems to be a good step in this direction. These skills and capabilities will remain relevant in Iraq in years to come, and the strengthening of sustainable indigenous capability in this area is important.

Assessment: Good quality, rigorous conflict analysis which can produce informed understanding of conflict issues, drivers, and dynamics, and what can be done to address them, seemed lacking for most Government and NGO programmes and interventions, while a small number of agencies and organisations with large budgets and specializing in this area were able to carry out regular conflict analysis. Noticeably, several major international agencies, while conducting *needs assessments* for their areas, do not carry out or use *conflict assessments and analysis* to see how conflict issues might impact upon their work or how their work might impact conflicts. Several key international donors also showed little awareness of conflict analysis or integration of the outputs of conflict analysis into their programmes and funding lines. On the whole, though Iraq as a country has experienced wars on and off for the past 30 years as well as high levels of internal violence (and, since 1991 and even more since 2003 high level of armed violence at the community level), the majority of both national and international organisations showed little understanding or capability for application of and using conflict analysis to guide and inform planning, development and design of peacebuilding interventions and measures to address conflict issues.[347] The extent to which diplomatic missions and international organisations understood conflict dynamics and peacebuilding opportunities was also questioned by many interviewees. This could be seen to have a direct result / impact on the quality, value and effectiveness of many engagements. DFID, the UN and others, however, were recognized as placing increasing focus on rigorous strategic assessments and analysis of the conflict. The extent to which individual programme officers and funding lines are then able to effectively integrate this into defining their scope and direction should be assessed.

Policy Advocacy & Lobbying (13)

Policy Advocacy and Lobbying has taken the form of interventions by senior leaders (such as Ayatollah Al Sistani's call for elections after the invasion), NGOs and NGO coalitions promoting legislative change, or sectors (academics, workers unions) lobbying for legislative or other change. Many interviewees cited lobbying efforts addressing Iraq's NGO legislation as a positive example of the potential role of NGOs. This is also discussed in NCCI's *Iraq's Civil Society in Perspective*.[348]

Assessment: Most interviewees who addressed this issue identified serious gaps / challenges facing Iraqi organisations and civil society to be able to effectively advocate for policy and other changes. In many cases, political parties and state institutions are non-responsive to civil society organisations, unless those organisations are pro-actively endorsing / supporting the parties in question. Skill and capacity for advocacy and lobbying was also seen to be weak amongst the majority of Iraqi organisations. Still, some organisations spoke of important engagements to advocate for women's rights, human rights, and the rights of IDPs and vulnerable communities. Iraqis spoke of the importance of greater cooperation,

coordination and solidarity across sectors and organisations to bring about positive reforms and legislative changes, and to protect gains already achieved. A challenge identified by several interviewees however was the capacity of Iraqi state institutions to implement programmes and policies effectively, regardless of legislative changes or policy adaptation at the governmental level.

Public Awareness Raising Activities & Campaigns (14)

A number of public awareness raising activities and campaigns have been carried out by Iraqi organisations. These cover issues ranging from: human rights / women's rights, messages for peace and nonviolence, awareness raising on elections and political processes. The most well known campaign cited by several organisations was LAONF's nonviolence campaign. In recent years, many Iraqi organisations have also joined with the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) and the global movement against gun violence to take part in the "Global Week of Action Against Gun Violence." A number of Iraqi human rights and women's organisations also take part in the annual international 16-days campaign against violence against women.

Assessment: Public awareness raising activities and campaigns can be important ways of reaching out to the broader population and engaging them on key issues. Their purpose is to *impact* on people's attitudes and mindsets, as well as group behaviour and relations. The *actual impact* they have, however, is often quite small, though organisations are continuously working to increase it. A study which would actively involve Iraqi organisations working on awareness raising to assess the impact on people's views of their activities would be quite important. Given the generally negative view which many Iraqis hold of civil society organisations it is important to assess how NGOs may effectively earn confidence and trust and carry out awareness raising activities in a way that will actually *impact* upon opinions and views held. Interviewees spoke of the small scale of many of these campaigns, that they are isolated / limited to a few cities, and often to not have significant impact on people's attitudes and behaviours. While the importance of raising public awareness and engaging to promote peace and nonviolence to the broader population was seen as important, it was suggested that these activities would have to (i) significantly increase their scale, (ii) be continued over time, and (iii) combine with other activities to play a role in shifting / changing public attitudes. The fact that many Iraqis are tired / exhausted by the war and want peace, and that there is broad dissatisfaction across many sectors with failure to improve living conditions, economic performance, and service delivery in Iraq, was cited in several interviews as a factor which increases receptiveness by the public to these issues. The increasing mobilisation of Iraqi civil society organisations for nonviolence, against sectarianism, and to take on issues such as gun violence and violence against women is significant. If strengthened this could help contribute to further popular engagement and engagement by key sectors (religious leaders, businesses, unions, media, politicians) to promote peacebuilding and resolve conflicts through nonviolent means.

Public Demonstrations (15)

Public demonstrations have a long history in Iraq, though prior to 2003 they were often organised by the government. Opposition protests were often severely repressed. After the Coalition invasion, public demonstrations became more frequent, though they still faced repression from the Occupation authorities.[349] Currently in Iraq demonstrations are most often organised against high costs, complaints against government, and failure to meet people's basic needs and re-establish services (eg. electricity), as well as to protect key sectors and communities (such as workers, women's rights, etc.) have taken place in many parts of Iraq. More recently these have increased following similar actions across the region and North Africa beginning with Tunisia and Egypt. Unions and associations as well as religious leaders have often been active in calling on citizens to demonstrate. Public mobilization and demonstration has been one of the key forms of direct citizens' engagement on issues in Iraq. While these have at times been violent —particularly during the height of the sectarian violence where demonstrations often took on sectarian dimensions— they have

also shown a powerful front for citizen engagement. The internet has also been used to communicate and coordinate actions across different cities in Iraq. Most recently, increasing frustration across all of Iraq's communities over the failure of the government to improve basic security and conditions such as provision of electricity and the prevalence of wide-spread corruption has stimulated demonstrations.

Assessment: Demonstrations and public action can be an important vehicle for protest and to raise demands for measures to address populations' needs and concerns. As many in Iraq have become increasingly tired of sectarian violence, demands to end corruption and to re-establish services can provide common issues bringing people together across sectarian lines. A number of interviewees raised concerns about the state's willingness to resort to violence against demonstrators, and what this indicates about the potential for increasing authoritarianism in the relation of the state to Iraqi citizens. This will be an important issue to track and address in coming months and years.

Nonviolent Direct Action (16)

Few examples of Nonviolent Direct Action were cited. These mainly included recent cases of civil society organisations providing nonviolent accompaniment and presence for public demonstrations, placing themselves between police and demonstrators and helping to liaise to prevent escalation or confrontation. Networks such as LAONF are working to raise awareness about nonviolence in Iraq but fewer examples were cited of direct nonviolence action to address key issues and grievances.[350]

Assessment: In the overall violent context in Iraq over the last decades little attention has been given to direct nonviolent actions. Several interviewees spoke of the need to strengthen and promote knowledge, understanding and skills for nonviolent action and peacebuilding as tools which can be used to address conflict issues without violence. In general, however, there could be said to be a broad 'scepticism' within Iraq about nonviolence. Given the country's history, and the fact that this can be found in many countries, this is not surprising. To address this, practical training in nonviolence, drawing upon examples and traditions of nonviolence within Iraqi history, culture and religious, and promoting nonviolence in schools, were all seen as important areas of work. These engagements remain relatively small scale in their impact on overall conflict dynamics in Iraq at the moment, but could have greater impact in the future if well supported.

Use of Visual Arts (posters, banners, etc.) (17)

Mainly used as part of NGO activities and public awareness raising campaigns.

Assessment: While at times making people aware that events / actions are taking place, interviewees questioned how effective these were in contributing to change in and of themselves. They have been seen mainly as promotional tools linked with other activities / actions which are the primary instruments for achieving change.

Commercials and TV Ads / Messages Promoting Peace (18)

When asked for engagements by the government in peacebuilding and reconciliation the most frequently cited answers referred to government messages and advertising on TV to promote messages of peace, nonviolence and reconciliation.

Assessment: Television and radio channels in particular have often been highly biased and/or sectarian and played key roles in promoting violence and demonization / delegitimization of the other in Iraq. Ads and commercials that promote peacebuilding, nonviolence, reconciliation, and messages which unite people in Iraq rather than dividing them can be of importance. Several interviewees, however, suggested that cynicism can develop if people see the government promoting messages in one way but behaving another. Consistency is important. The majority of government / state sponsored ads were said to be promoting the strength and role of the

military and the state. While important for working to re-establish authority of a functioning state in Iraq, it is important that these messages not be communicated in ways that alienate or seem to be against sectors / communities of the Iraqi population. TV ads and commercials, however, which can be done in such a way that they will be popular with people in Iraq, and resonate with the public, can be a way of promoting broader discussion, engagement with and awareness of peacebuilding and what Iraqi citizens can do to contribute to it.

Media Support & Training (19)

Prior to 2003 the majority of Iraqis were used to receiving only state run media. After 2003 a large number of different stations and channels were established. Most Iraqis interviewed had a negative perception of the role of the media in promoting violence in Iraq and when asked about the quality and independence of media. Media was broadly seen to be controlled by political parties / sectarian actors. The way media reported on stories and the language used often exacerbated or directly escalated tensions and violence. Scenes of violence, messages of violence, and sectarian messages were common. Iraqi journalists interviewed also spoke about the negative impact that a lot of media had had during the height of sectarian conflict. Journalists themselves also often faced threats or were killed for the ways in which they covered stories. A number of projects have been carried out in media training, working with journalists and editors, to support professionalization of the media and to establish media training centres across Iraq. Training has also been done for politicians, NGOs and others to improve how they communicate with and work with the media. Organisations involved have included: UNESCO, IREX, UNOPS, the Dutch "Press Now"; the Independent Media Center in Kurdistan (IMCK); the Independent Media Center in Baghdad (IMCB); the Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR); and USIP.[351] Most training has covered basic reporting skills, with only a few advanced programmes. The majority of training, however, has *not* dealt with issues related to peace journalism and conflict sensitive reporting, and only a small portion of the overall number of journalists and media in Iraq have been introduced to these issues. One programme working to address this is a joint initiative between USIP's Center of Innovation for Media, Conflict and Peacebuilding, the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania and UNESCO to work with Iraqi journalists and media to prevent media incitement to violence. The Mennonite Central Committee also has a project on peace journalism to train journalists and encourage them to talk about peacebuilding. Another initiative cited was the publication of guidelines prior to the March 2010 national elections. These were designed to limit inflammatory reporting.

Assessment: Media play a major role in shaping people's perceptions, particularly when it comes to issues of conflict. The media can be a powerful force for escalation of violence or strengthening peacebuilding and violence mitigation. The majority of media training in Iraq has not dealt directly with issues of reporting on conflict, reducing inflammatory reporting or peace journalism, but has instead focused on professionalization and basic media training. That said the establishment of a number of media centres across Iraq has been an important step. Working to integrate training on peace journalism into media training is key. This includes training of journalists, working with editors, as well as broader work on the production of guidelines and media regulations. NGOs, academics and journalists could also play a positive role in *campaigning* to transform the way media reports on conflict issues in Iraq. Interviewees noted that while training media is important, it is also necessary to follow-through on this training. One-off programs often have limited impact. Most training programmes have been of short duration. To bring about change in the way media reports on conflict issues requires sustained engagement. Work with editors, media owners, and political parties which have influence on media are also critical. For longer-term improvements, *peace journalism* should also be integrated into university programmes on journalism and media studies. Importantly: materials should be developed using Iraqi examples and drawing upon the large number of experienced and capable Iraqi journalists as trainers. More work also needs to be done to improve the relationship between media and civil society organisations / NGOs. Interviewees cited that most NGOs do not know how to effectively address the media and media often does not carry the work of organisations.

Networking & Coordination (20)

The situation regarding networking and coordination amongst NGOs and in peacebuilding efforts in Iraq is mixed. On the one hand, *most* interviewees cited serious difficulties, challenges and gaps in networking and coordination amongst those working in peacebuilding in Iraq across all levels —organisations and actors in Iraq, international organisations involved in / supporting peacebuilding projects in Iraq (from the United Nations to international NGOs), and donors funding peacebuilding work in Iraq. Both Iraqi and international interviewees characterized cooperation amongst international organisations as "terrible." There were few examples of donors supporting peacebuilding programmes in Iraq effectively coordinating with one another or even knowing —in any significant detail— what was being done by other donors and the programmes they support in Iraq. Another critical area identified by interviewees was the clear lack of coordination and engagement in most projects and programmes with relevant government and state institutions. While state representatives or political party figures may be invited to events and most organisations have some level of 'engagement' with their relevant state counterparts, little is done in the way of joint planning and coordination. Within Iraq, most projects are carried out in silos and with little communication / coordination with other organisations, even if they are working on the same issues, and often even when they are working in the same geographical region. Competition for funding was cited as a factor negatively affecting cooperation (for both local and international organisations). A lack of trust between organisations was also cited. The majority of initiatives are not linked, and this leads to duplication of efforts and loss of potential cumulative impact which could be achieved if there was better coordination together. At the same time, some very good trends and experiences in coordination were identified. The work of NCCI and the support it provides to its members was cited as a good example. It was also mentioned that UNOPS has begun to map and support coordinating actions from NGOs working in the same field in projects they support —placing more emphasis and putting funds into common projects and programmes to increase impact and broaden beneficiaries. Positive experiences were also cited around networking and cooperation amongst several organisations when working to bring about legislative change or to engage with parliament, including in bringing in the new NGO law. Since 2004 the Iraqi Women's network has brought together more than 90NGOs to work together for women's rights, against violence against women, family law, and women's participation in parliament and government. Both formal and informal networks amongst journalists were cited as important for enabling sharing of information and exchange across the country. In peacebuilding, it was said that there are up to 6 different 'mini'-networks. Those cited included NCCI, USIP's peace network and LAONF. It was mentioned that Al Amal also wants to create a peace network.

Assessment: The conditions within Iraq immediately following the invasion in 2003 presented natural difficulties and challenges for organisations and initiatives to network and coordinate together across the country. At the same time, those very conditions were an added reason for *why* improved coordination and cooperation was needed. The lack of appropriate coordination in Iraq reached endemic levels in the years immediately following the Occupation. Many international organisations made little or no effort to understand what was being done by other organisations, either in the past or at the same time as their work. Organisations working on exactly the same issues within Iraq made little or no efforts to link up, communicate, or coordinate their work. Inside Iraq the situation was equally difficult. One challenge has been limited resources and the sheer scale of work facing many organisations. Another has been the 'culture' of NGO work as it developed in Iraq. At times, however, organisations did not link together with others out of security concerns and fears for safety. With the explosion of NGO activities and projects after 2003 there were also a large number of rapidly implemented projects and growth in number of organisations. Following 2008 and reductions in funding for NGO activity, many of these organisations disappeared. Now, there is a greater understanding and *self-identification* of the importance of coordination and networking amongst many organisations in Iraq. It is not enough to simply create networks though —as experience in Iraq and elsewhere has shown. *How* they are managed, communication, engagement and support to members are all crucial issues.

Even in the cases of networks which were cited as examples there were many challenges facing how they were led, transparency, engagement of members, etc. For networks to be successful they have to address key issues of importance to their members and enable them to *practically* achieve more together on issues that are important to them then they could apart. Several interviewees involved with networks in Iraq suggested the need for an evaluation of experiences to-date. While more coordination and improved cooperation is needed, organisations should learn from what has happened so far and clearly map out their needs and expectations for networks and how they will be achieved if future experiences are to improve. The need to avoid duplication was also cited. While it can be understandable to have different networks relating to peacebuilding and nonviolence if those networks and their members are engaging in different issues (mediation, peace education, nonviolence, preventing violence against women), several interviewees also suggested it would be important to help *link together more broadly* the different organisations and actors working on peacebuilding and conflict issues in Iraq, enabling greater cooperation, joint action, and sharing and exchange of lessons learned. Working to strengthen and improve coordination between state institutions and NGOs could also help to improve impact and sustainability of programmes.

Trauma counselling and work with Victims & Survivors (21)

The scale of violence and its impact in Iraq has been overwhelming. Hundreds of thousands have been killed, hundreds of thousands wounded, and millions of Iraqis displaced within Iraq or made refugees internationally. Cumulatively there are millions of widows and orphans in Iraq from the country's last three wars and sectarian violence. Almost all Iraqis have had direct experience with violence, from members of families killed, beaten, raped, injured or displaced, to those involved in carrying out these acts. The entire population has experienced living in the conditions of war, violence and insecurity. Interviewees cited work with victims and survivors and trauma counselling and assistance as of critical importance but dramatically underfunded and under supported. Many cited the incredible strength of survivors, but also the difficulties and challenges they faced. Women-headed households are amongst those most cited as needing support. A number of organisations are striving to do their best to work with widows and orphans but dramatically lack the resources they need. The psychological impact of the war and violence on Iraqis of all generations is not receiving the attention it needs. Discussion on working with survivors and healing from the visible and invisible impacts and effects of the wars and violence in Iraq are often postponed as politicians, media and organisations focus more on issues of security and political negotiations. This is a critical gap which will have long-term ramifications and impact on Iraqi society.

Assessment: There are many highly experienced people who have been working with survivors in Iraq. Unfortunately this research project was not able in its scope to engage with them as fully as needed. Local and international organisations and donors should ensure that this issue is being addressed, and clearly identify organisations in Iraq and state institutions which should be supported to deal with these issues.

International Awareness Raising & Solidarity Actions (22)

Prior to the war in Iraq one of the largest global movements in world history was developed to campaign against the war, with between 15 – 18 million people demonstrating globally on February 15th 2003 to prevent war from happening. After the war broke out, much of this active international engagement was dramatically reduced. A number of organisations, however, stayed involved. In addition to NGOs and international agencies which have worked in Iraq there have also been those who have worked to bring awareness of what is happening in Iraq back to their countries, communities and internationally. Much of this has been done by individuals sharing their experiences. Writers, photographers and film directors/makers have also played a major role in making visible to the world what is happening in Iraq. Initiatives such as Iraq Body Count focused on keeping people informed

about the number of casualties in Iraq resulting from the on-going war and violence. Organisations such as Peaceful Tomorrows, NOVA, and Un Ponte Per have worked proactively to bring the voices and stories of the people of Iraq —and of what is being done in Iraq to promote nonviolence and peacebuilding— to Europe and North America. Many unions, human rights and women's organisations have also been involved in bringing colleagues from Iraq to share their stories and information on their work and what is happening in Iraq. This has included invitations to participate in international symposia and conferences to bringing representatives from Iraqi organizations and unions to speak to the World Social Forum, European Social Forum, and others. Several international film festivals have also featured movies from Iraq and provided a forum for Iraqi actors and directors to share their experiences. International solidarity actions and awareness raising about what is happening in Iraq has played an important role both for Iraqi organisations and individuals to know they're not alone and that their work is supported, and to raise awareness in other countries about the situation in Iraq and what Iraqi individuals and organisations are doing to address it. Many Iraqi organisations have also coordinated actions inside Iraq with solidarity actions in other parts of the world (such as the Iraqi Nonviolent Action Week).

Assessment: International awareness raising and solidarity actions have been incredibly important for those affected by them. They have helped to provide both practical moral, organisational and financial support to Iraqi nonviolent and peacebuilding initiatives. In cases of solidarity actions by nonviolent and peace organisations from the United States such as Peaceful Tomorrows and Iraqi Veterans Against the War, they have also helped to show Iraqis that many US citizens did not support the war in their country and were working to assist and support people in Iraq. These have laid important seeds for long-term healing and forgiveness. Organisations such as NOVA and Un Ponte Per and their partners have also shown long-term sustained support to their partners in Iraq. This has helped initiatives such as LAONF to grow and develop. These organisations bring more than simply funding or 'project' engagement. Unlike many 'top-down' imposed projects, they work to develop long-term partnership based upon mutual respect and solidarity. They are committed to working with their partners in Iraq over the long-term to address the issues that their partners identify as necessary and important. They use this engagement to raise awareness in their own countries / communities. This has led in some cases to direct support from their governments (local and national) to Iraqi organisations. With international attention increasingly diverted from Iraq and a number of donors reducing support for engagement in Iraq, the work of international solidarity organisations partnering with colleagues and organisations in Iraq will grow in importance. At the same time, there are also challenges. Much of this work has focused on supporting *activism and public actions* in Iraq. A major contribution has been in supporting networking and linking together of different organisations in Iraq working on peacebuilding and nonviolence. This work is important and should continue. A number of interviewees identified, however, that while many international solidarity activists / workers have shown high levels of 'solidarity' with Iraqi organisations, they haven't always taken the time to gain a deep / serious understanding and analysis of the issues and causes of conflicts in Iraq or what type of work could most effectively be done to address them. Focus is often more on one or two organisations within the partnership, or with key individuals, and may not always engage as effectively with the broader range of organisations. Partnerships are also developed principally from individual encounters and meetings, and not from being aware of the broader range of initiatives in Iraq and seeing where support could best contribute. Iraqi counterparts sometimes de facto become gatekeepers, and other organisations or individuals who may be working on similar issues in Iraq may not be included. Solidarity initiatives could also do more to work together with Iraqi and international organisations to map out and identify what is being done in peacebuilding and nonviolence by different actors and how they can improve coordination and cooperation together.

Treaties & Regional Engagement (23)[352]

Neighbouring and external countries played a major role in the violence of the last several years. Neighbouring countries have in many cases been directly involved in arming, training and supplying different factions in Iraq and smuggling of weapons, goods and

combatants across borders significantly contributed to further destabilisation in Iraq. Increasingly, the Iraqi government has worked to reach out to and improve relations with neighbouring states while clearly asserting Iraq's sovereignty. This has also included efforts to address outstanding border disputes and disputes over territory. Recent negotiations and engagement with Iraq's neighbours have contributed to the general dynamic of stabilisation and improvement in Iraq. The role played by neighbouring countries during the extended process to form a new government was also noteworthy. For example the Initiative of King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia in October 2010 which offered the full support of Saudi Kingdom to make Iraq stable and help the Iraqi leaders to form the government after the March 2010 elections, despite their differences. In addition to that Iraq's call to Iran to sign border treaty between the two countries, following the Iranian occupation of al-Fakkah oil field. As well as the official cooperation to control borders between Iraq and Syria. While many Iraqis were highly critical of what was perceived as external interference, it was significant that many countries, on the whole, contributed stabilising roles and tried to engage to assist the process of establishing a new government. The initiative to host the 2011 meeting of the Arab League in Iraq is also taken as a positive sign by many Iraqis.

Assessment: The Iraq was has contributed to and fuelled dramatic escalation and intensification of conflict dynamics in the region on many levels, particularly sectarian conflicts. It has brought mass displacement of millions of refugees living in neighbouring countries. While the war was principally a direct result of the US invasion of Iraq and the systematic mismanagement of the transition period that followed, the role of neighbouring countries also contributed to fuel sectarian violence and competition of different groups against each other. Stabilisation in Iraq and the region greatly benefits from improving relations between the countries and bi-lateral and regional efforts at peacebuilding and peacemaking. One measure which could help to strengthen this trend would be the establishment of a Department or Unit within the Foreign Ministry specifically dealing with mediation, negotiations, peacebuilding and peacemaking in the region, strengthening government infrastructure and capacity for constructive bi-lateral and multi-lateral engagement and peacebuilding.

Funding (24)

Funding for peacebuilding projects was identified as a key issue by several interviewees. Many interviewees noticed the extreme discrepancy between funds given for military interventions and training and development of Iraq's armed forces with the amount of funds made available for addressing key issues which could have contributed to stabilization of Iraq and addressing key conflict factors. A number of interviewees noted that the provision of funds for peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts by NGOs and international donors (including UNAMI), were driving factors behind that work which was done on peacebuilding and reconciliation. Significant amounts of funding have been provided in Iraq without proper oversight and accountability. This also applies to current government funds and use of oil revenue. On the whole, however only a small portion of international or national funding has been dedicated to peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts. Many donors, focusing on key infrastructure development projects or security sector reform and government institution strengthening, have not fully integrated peace and conflict assessments into their work.

Assessment: Interviews with donor agencies providing funding in Iraq showed in many cases a lack of deep understanding or awareness of peacebuilding and what can be done to address conflicts and key development issues in Iraq through empowerment of the Iraqi people and nonviolent conflict transformation. Most donors do not have strategies for peacebuilding, reconciliation, or violence prevention and mitigation. At the same time, to the extent that there have been projects and activities in Iraq on nonviolence and peacebuilding this was in many cases cited to be a result or to some degree dependent on funding and support from external sources. This does not necessarily suggest that the drive for these efforts is not itself coming from within Iraq, but rather that little internal support could be found for sustaining these efforts without external assistance. While a

number of key religious, union and civil society leaders have played important roles in calling for nonviolence, reconciliation and peacebuilding, this has not been the dominant dynamic in Iraq, either during the civil war or today. Interviewees identified: (i) the need for a more substantial focus on national reconciliation and peacebuilding by donors and development partners in Iraq and (ii) the need to significantly increase funding to support the development of peacebuilding capabilities, infrastructure for peace, and nonviolent measures and capacities to address conflict issues in Iraq; (iii) the need for improved coordination amongst donors. Many NGOs and Iraqi and international interviewees also spoke of 'donor driven agendas' affecting the work of local organisations. Greater efforts should be made to authentically engage Iraqi stakeholders —including the government, civil society and other key groups and sectors, including national communities, ethnic and religious groups, women, youth, businesses, unions, etc.— in working together with donors to jointly identify priorities.

Types of Change

"Types of change refer to specific changes expressed in the actual program design and/ or evaluation, either as goals, objectives, or indicators." [353]

Designing for Results,
Chapter 2 "Understanding Change"

Types of Change is a key concept in peacebuilding. It asks the question *what actual change are we trying to achieve with this intervention / activity / programme?* Crucially, it involves a change *from* something *to* something. This is why good programme design involves a rigorous understanding of the situation —through needs analysis and conflict assessments — to see 'what is the situation now': what dynamics, factors, issues, structures, relationships, attitudes, behaviours, etc. are contributing to or creating / sustaining how things are now. A programme is intended then either to *sustain* or *transform* some aspect of 'how things are now' to contribute towards achieving 'how you want them to be'. Types of change are the specific changes which programme activities should achieve in order to contribute to realising this *desired future*.[354] Organisations, therefore, also need to know how the specific goals they are working for will contribute to realising the *desired* future and change in the situation they wish to see. For example:

- If we are training people on peacebuilding
- If we are demonstrating for improvements in service delivery and ending corruption
- If we are training police for respecting human rights
- If we are implementing nonviolence and peace education in schools
- If we are facilitating a mediation process and engagement with stakeholders to address the resolution of disputed territories
- If we are lobbying and advocating for legislative change

We should assess:
1. What types of change are we trying to achieve with each of these activities?; and
2. What changes need to take place for these activities to be successful?

In answering these questions, we need to know clearly:
3. What are the specific goals for which we are trying to achieve these changes?
   This refers to the desired *outcome* —the immediate change— which organisations are trying to bring about through their programmes. Organisations would then assess what are the exact goals of each of the types of activities above.

To link the results of our work to an actual change in the conflict or overall context and situation, we need to then see:
4. How will this *specific* goal, if achieved, contribute to the *desired future* I am trying to work for?

The *Searching for Peace in Iraq* project went so far as to discuss with interviewees engaged in peacebuilding work the *types of changes* they were trying to achieve in their projects, the *types of changes* they saw other organisations working for, and the *logic* behind why these changes were important for peacebuilding in Iraq. From the goals and objectives of projects and activities to address conflict issues, promote peacebuilding, or foster nonviolence, stability and security in Iraq, 18 distinct *types of change* could be clearly identified. The following table lists these types of change with a brief description of each and the 'logic' of how they contribute or are relevant for peacebuilding.

	Change in	Description	Logic
1	Attitudes/ Perceptions	Of individuals and more broadly of groups / population. Trying to change key attitudes and perceptions which fuel or feed into the conflict, or engendering attitudes and perceptions which can help resolve conflict issues. This could include working to overcome prejudices, demonization and stereotypes of the other to working to overcome people's feelings of powerlessness and belief that there's nothing they can do. Key attitude changes some organisations identified themselves as working for included: • From belief that violence is legitimate / right / acceptable to use against the other to recognition that violence makes things worse for all parties; • From focusing only on what 'our' group or 'I' want to seeing how we can achieve outcomes which meet the needs and interests of all parties involved; • From blaming the other for all the problems taking place to identifying the roles that all sides have played and what can be done by all to improve the situation; • From expectation that others will solve issues to recognize responsibility to engage	People's attitudes and perceptions — of each other, of key conflict issues, of how conflicts can or should be solved — affect their behaviours and how they relate to each other. Transforming / overcoming attitudes which sustain violence, hatred and enemy images or 'exclusive' claims is important to enable peacebuilding.
2	Behaviour/ Actions	Including working with people / groups to stop using behaviour and actions which escalate violence. This includes also work to: • Reduce / stop violence against women and domestic violence • Reduce / stop human rights violations by security and police forces • Calls by religious leaders, NGOs and others to encourage people to reject violence and use peaceful, nonviolent methods Media messages, public awareness raising programmes, peace education programmes in schools, etc may all aim at getting people to use effective, constructive and nonviolent methods for resolving disputes rather than violent behaviour and actions. Concrete walls placed between neighbourhoods —while strongly disliked by many— were intended to stop the behaviour of violent attacks between communities.	Ending, reducing, preventing violent and / or antagonistic behaviour is key if parties are to find ways to resolve conflicts effectively. As long as violence continues, it makes it difficult for parties to address conflicts. Reducing violent behaviour can help address key fears / concerns and improve security.

	Change in	Description	Logic
3	Rhetoric & Language Used	Some projects aimed at working with political leaders, religious leaders, journalists and other —from local to national levels— to understand how their language and rhetoric can inflame sectarian divisions and violence and to change discourse and narratives in the media, politics, etc. to promote mutual respect and inclusion. Interviewees recognized that in many cases, language used by religious, tribal, political leaders and others, and by the media, often contributes to escalating tensions and polarisation and fuelling violence. Programmes in schools and community-dispute resolution programmes have also focused on making people aware of how their language and rhetoric can be perceived by the other and to improve nonviolent / non-aggressive communication.	Violent language, promoting fears, demonization, and hatred by tribal, community, religious, and political leaders, media, and others fuels violence and negative group relations. Changing this to rhetoric and language which rejects violence and fosters trust, respect, and inclusion can support improving relations and addressing conflict issues.
4	Skills & Knowledge	This includes a wide-range of possible 'changes' relating to developing skills, knowledge and capabilities on different issues. Improving skills and knowledge can empower individuals, organisations, sectors and communities to be able to address key issues and resolve / transform conflicts. The 'change' would be from 'not having' such skills and knowledge or having them at a certain level, to 'having them' or having them at a better level. In terms of peacebuilding and conflict transformation, interviewees primarily identified trying to achieve changes in skills and knowledge for: conflict analysis; community-based needs and conflict assessments; training; mediation and negotiation; rights; nonviolence. Programmes have also focused on improving knowledge of options and methods for resolving constitutional disputes, disputed territories, land management, etc.	Improving the skills and knowledge of key individuals or actors and organisations at different levels can help to *empower* and *enable* them to find effective ways of transforming conflicts.
5	Resources	This can include changing access to or availability of resources. An example could be the development of training materials or guides on peacebuilding, negotiations, mediation, peace journalism, etc. in Arabic, Kurdish and other languages, and making these available to organisations and agencies. Resource change can also include making funding available for peacebuilding programmes or assisting organisations to buy / rent computers, materials, cars and offices to enable them to do their work.	Certain resources are key to implementing / doing peacebuilding. Provision of these resources or helping individuals / communities see how to acquire / develop them can help them do effective peacebuilding.
6	Motivation	Interviewees spoke of trying to achieve changes in people's levels of motivation and to strengthen a sense of ownership and dedication to working to end / reduce violence and improve the situation in their community / country. This can include trying to motivate political leaders or local authorities to be willing to negotiation and work with others, to motivating youth to engage in non-violent programmes across communities, to motivating government officials / authorities to cooperate with and engage in peacebuilding programmes.	If parties are motivated and feel they can make a change —and see why it is important too— it will increase the likelihood of their authentic engagement to address conflict issues.

	Change in	Description	Logic
7	Relationships	Changing relationships between *individuals* or *groups of individuals*. This can include working to improve relationships, to overcome hostilities, to change the *dynamics* of how people relate to each other. Dialogue, mediation and community-reconciliation processes often aim to help overcome antagonistic relationships and improve positive / healthy relationships.	Changing how individuals relate can help them overcome conflicts and contribute to changing how communities / groups relate.
8	Group Behaviour	Changing the way groups / communities more broadly relate to each other. This links with other types of changes including changes in attitudes, perceptions and behaviour. Changing group behaviour can include: • Getting militia members to stop using violence • Reducing / ending practice of FGM • Getting political leaders / parties to cooperate constructively rather than wage political battles	Changing group behaviour from behaviour which fuels violence or drives conflicts to behaviour which ends violence and addresses the root causes of conflict is essential to building sustainable peace.
9	Strategies of Conflict Parties	Working with conflict parties to shift from using violence as a strategy to achieve goals to using political or other constructive / nonviolent means. This can include increasing the cost of using violence as well as increasing the attractiveness and likelihood of success of other methods (eg. entering the political process). Change here means working to get conflict parties to increasingly refrain from / refuse the use of violence and to adopt political, economic and other strategies to achieve legitimate issues and goals.	The *strategies* parties believe will enable them to achieve their goals play a key role in defining their behaviours and role in a conflict. As parties increasingly adopt strategies which provide an alternative to violence, violent behaviour is reduced.
10	Sectoral Engagement	Changing *how* sectors *engage* in the conflict. This can include: • Mobilizing religious, tribal and business leaders to use their influence to promote peace, prevent and restrain violence, and address conflicts effectively • Encouraging youth to refuse to take part in violence • Work with media to stop violence-escalating and demonising reporting and instead engage in professional peace journalism and quality reporting • Getting political parties and leadership to move away from support for violence and non-constructive, conflict sustaining strategies to engaging for national reconciliation and responsible political leadership • Working with teachers and academics to promote peace education, respect for diversity and nonviolence in schools and universities • Getting combatants to shift from using violence to campaigning for ending violence and sectarian conflict and mobilizing their communities for reconciliation Changing sectoral engagement is about more than changing the approach of individuals. It's about trying to get a *sector* to change their role in how they approach the conflict.	Religious, political, tribal and business leaders all have important influence and leverage. If they use their voices to mobilize for national reconciliation and peacebuilding rather than violence this will contribute to ending violence and resolving conflicts in Iraq. Media, combatants, youth, and others are also key actors. Changing how they can engage can promote nonviolent behaviour and resolution of disputes.

	Change in	Description	Logic
11	Societal Engagement	Trying to change societal engagement includes trying to shift attitudes, norms and behaviours at the societal level and not just amongst individuals. In Iraq this includes work to promote rejection of violence and understanding and support for nonviolence, to improve knowledge and understanding amongst citizens of democratic and human rights and responsibilities, to encourage citizens to hold government and political parties to account, to get Iraqis to increasingly reject sectarianism and work for a common future. Examples of types of societal change organisations have worked for include: • For Iraqis to vote and exercise their sovereign democratic rights; • For citizens to demand improved performance by government and meeting citizens' needs • For citizens to reject the use of violence in their communities and nationally	Iraqi society *can* influence leadership and what happens in the country. Combatants and militias *come from* within Iraqi society. Empowering / mobilizing Iraqi society to reject sectarianism and violence and to work for and demand national reconciliation and good governance can support peace.
12	Elite Engagement	For most of the last several years few Iraqi NGOs have seen themselves as able to change elite engagement, but many other actors have played important roles here. Religious leaders in particular have played key roles in shaping elite engagement — often calling for ending sectarian violence or for resolving political disputes. Some neighbouring countries following the 2010 elections played roles to get political leaders from different parties to form a new government. More broadly, Iraqi citizens increasing rejection of sectarian violence from 2008 onwards is credited with having forced —at least to some extent— a shift amongst political parties, from sectarian division to increasing cross-sectarian cooperation. Many Iraqis hope for a change in elite engagement to reflect authentic effort to address the problems of the country instead of elites benefitting themselves at the expense of the country.	Political, Religious and other leaders can have strong influence amongst their communities / constituencies. They are also key actors involved in processes to address / resolve conflict issues. Improving elite engagement in Iraq can help to address conflict issues, end violence, and improve stability and security.
13	Environment / Context	'Environment' and 'context' refer to what is around people in Iraq —what they see, live, feel, experience about them. It includes 'physical' space as well as general attitudes, behaviours, manifestations of the conflict. Hate messages in media, soldiers / militias on the street, lack of electricity, being physically divided by concrete walls, seeing political leadership fail to resolve conflict issues, being forced out of their homes, having loved ones attacked, killed, or killing others. All of this and much more are part of the 'context' and 'environment' of the conflict. As many Iraqi interviewees noted, the *context* and dynamic of the violence led to actions and behaviours which people never would have accepted before becoming *normal* or 'necessary' for survival. Changes in the context and environment refer to changing all of these factors and are results of both the other types of changes and specific actions to change the context / environment people are living in, eg. removing physical barriers, moving troops out of cities, encouraging people to resume behaviours and relationships they may have had before the war.	The 'environment' of the war, chaos and sectarian violence had a major impact on people's behaviour, choices and experience over the past few years. Identifying measures which can positively transform people's felt / lived experience and environment for the better can strengthen normalcy, overcoming insecurity and fear, and fostering confidence-building and stability.

	Change in	Description	Logic
14	Institutions	Institutions can refer to government structures and bodies (from local authorities to national governments), security services (military, police, etc.), courts, educational institutions, religious institutions, media, etc. If people / communities have previously been excluded from institutions, denied opportunities or rights, or if institutions have been abusive, authoritarian and non-representative —as many in Iraq were before and after 2003— this can fuel violence and war. Changing institutions can mean working to improve *efficiency* and *functioning* of institutions to improving *representation* and *inclusiveness*. In some cases it might including creating institutions which otherwise don't exist. In Iraq, there are efforts to improve the functioning of government institutions and ministries, security services, courts, local authorities, etc. Many of these became highly sectarian during the conflict. Changing / improving these are seen as key to resolving conflict issues and improving effective governance.	*Effective, trusted and representative / inclusive* institutions are key to sustainable peace. If government and other key institutions are not able to function, or if people feel excluded from them, this can fuel instability and continuing conflict.
15	Processes	In Iraq there has been a lack in many cases of effective processes to: deal with conflicts effectively; prevent the outbreak of violence; facilitate communities / groups meeting their needs collectively; for citizens to have their voices heard. Practical *changes* in processes include putting in place processes for managing disputes and engaging stakeholders to resolve issues without violence, to creating mechanisms for representation and participation, or improving processes for decision-making and functioning in ministries and state structures (including the passage of laws). A substantial amount of focus in the past years has been on improving processes. Interviewees recognized the need for *much* more to be done in this area.	The development of effective processes for resolving disputes, as well as processes which enable government and institutions to function better, contributes to peace and stability and prevents the outbreak of violence.
16	Laws	Many Iraqi organisations have been involved in working for key legislative change relating to human rights, minorities, women, NGOs, etc. This also includes working to improve the ability of state institutions to properly *implement* laws, and of citizens to know their rights under the law.	A functioning legal framework which protects citizens' rights improves good governance and enables disputes to be dealt with through legal rather than violent means.
17	Norms & Culture	Iraq's political culture has long been based on the rule of strong / authoritarian leaders. 'Change of power' has usually been brought about through violent / bloody means. Decades of war and sanctions have also taken their impact on Iraqi norms and culture. Violent behaviour between communities which would not have previously been acceptable to many fuelled sectarian conflict. Many Iraqi organisations and others are working to transform aspects of violence and intolerance which have developed or been deeply rooted in the culture and to promote or draw upon cultural values which foster respect, dignity, human rights and peace.	Cultural messages which legitimize war, violence, oppression or demonization / delegitimization of the other fuel violence. Cultural values and messages which promote dignity, respect, dialogue, nonviolence and human rights can strengthen / contribute to peace.
18	Root Causes of Conflict	Many underlying root causes of conflict in Iraq remain, including how to define Iraqi identity and the political future of Iraq's communities. Key issues such as disputed territories still need to be resolved. *Changing / addressing* the root causes of conflict means bringing about effective resolution of the issues in dispute to meet the legitimate interests and needs of all the parties involved.	As long as the root causes of conflict are not addressed violence can still occur. Solving these issues is essential for sustainable peace.

Using 'Types of Change' to Plan and Design for Impact

The purpose of identifying the *types of change* organisations are trying to achieve with their work is to help them plan their work more effectively, improve quality and impact, and enable them to assess / evaluate if they are actually achieving that change —as well as to identify 'unintended' changes they may have contributed to. Three key questions for organisations are:

1. Are the types of changes we're trying to achieve the rights ones we should be working for? (given the need and context, resources available, etc)

2. Are we actually *achieving* those changes through our activities and what we're doing, and are our activities and how we're doing them sufficient or the right ones to enable those changes to take place?

3. Even if the changes have taken place / been achieved, are they actually having an impact on the overall *dynamic* of the conflict or on key pillars or aspects of the conflict, ie. are the changes we are achieving actually contributing to building / sustaining peace and transforming / resolving key conflict issues or dynamics?

Beyond this, it is also important to evaluate and assess:

4. Have the changes actually taken place or do we just think they have?

5. Are the changes sustainable? Ie. when the programme or process ends, can the changes achieved be sustained?

6. Can the changes be achieved be maintained in the face of challenge / crisis? Eg. if an agreement has been reached, can it be sustained if there is violence or a crisis?

The diagram below developed by the Department of Peace Operations (DPO) helps to illustrate this.

Designing for Impact[355]
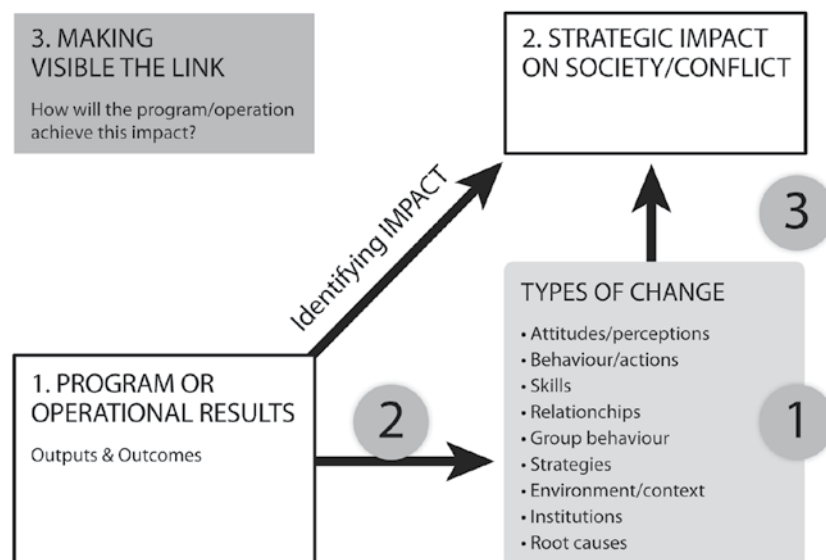
Types of Change: Assessment

Iraqi and international interviewees identified 6 important reflections relating to 'types of change' and peacebuilding programmes in Iraq:

1. **Important Changes have been taking place which strengthen peacebuilding in Iraq**. There are some reasons to be optimistic in Iraq. Important changes are taking place, including reductions in violence, gradual improvements in service delivery, improvements in the capacity and performance of security forces, engagement in political processes such as elections, reduced use of militias for sectarian violence, increasing resistance and opposition to sectarian violence among many sectors, and even small but important steps of political parties being willing to work together across sectarian lines. These *multiple* changes contribute to improving the situation in Iraq.

2. **Peacebuilding comes from *many* changes adding up, not from any single change** Each of the types of change identified above are important. None on their own is enough to end violence or contribute to sustainable peace, but cumulatively they can.

3. **Few Organisations Clearly Plan for or Know What Types of Change to Work for** Most organisations engage in little or no real strategic planning or clearly identifying the types of change they're working for, how to achieve them, and how these will contribute to overall peacebuilding. A lot of work is done on assumptions or because (1) donor funding is available or (2) that's what people identify with and feel is important. Many organisations may not have a clear idea of *what* types of change might be most important and how they can contribute towards this change. While the best organisations and processes may have a very clear understanding of what they're trying to achieve, lack of clearly identifying the changes they are trying to achieve is a characteristic of many / most organisations. There is also a significant gap between what they say they are trying to achieve and what their activities *actually* achieve.

4. **Real Change Requires Sustained Engagement** Even when changes have taken place, if they are not followed-up and sustained, the benefits may be lost. The challenging context in Iraq means that results need to be sustained and followed-through over time. Shifting focus by donors and organisations, lack of follow-through, and lack of coordination have sometimes meant that successful changes which have been achieved have not been sustained.

5. **Change needs to be related to the scale of the problem, well directed and address real conflict issues and drivers** To help contribute to peacebuilding, it's not enough simply to achieve 'change'. The change that programmes try to bring about has to be appropriate or related to the actual scale of the challenge. If conflicts are resolved effectively in 2 areas but in 30 others they are not, then efforts haven't yet reached the scale necessary. If training programmes or dialogue processes reach people who either aren't able to engage or are not the only ones necessary to include, then the efforts may not have been well enough directed. Also: many programmes achieve change in different ways, but interviewees recognized that these may not always have a link or contribute to actually transforming the conflict or addressing real conflict issues and drivers. Better planning and design of programmes are needed to make sure they are *relevant* and *appropriate* for the need.

6. **Some of what has been achieved remains fragile** While many Iraqis are optimistic and recognize that changes are taking place, they also often used terms such as 'powder keg' and 'potential for explosion'. Many of the changes which have led to a reduction in violence and sectarian killings remain fragile. A lot needs to still be done —and will be needed to be done for years to come— to consolidate and strengthen sustainable peace in Iraq.

Theories of Change: Programme Intervention Logic & Premises

"A useful first step in enhancing strategies in conflict prevention and peacebuilding programming and evaluation is to become more explicit about underlying assumptions regarding how change comes about —that is, theories of how to achieve peace. Prevention and peacebuilding activities are carried out based on specific ideas and goals concerning what they hope to achieve. Such decisions are based on a number of factors— including assumptions about how to bring about peace and theories about how to bring about change. Peace practitioners select methods, approaches and tactics that are rooted in a range of "theories" of how peace can be achieved in a specific context. It is important to disclose these "theories of change", both to test the theories against the realities of the conflict and to provide the basis for evaluating progress towards related objectives. ... The impacts, effectiveness, relevance, efficiency and sustainability of a ... prevention and peacebuilding activity rest to a large extent on the accuracy of its underlying theory of change. A false or incomplete theory may be a key explanatory factor for the failure of a programme, project or policy. In contrast, good theories (based on an up-to-date, thorough conflict analysis) contribute to effective ... prevention and peacebuilding action and successful interventions. Analysis of the theory of change is therefore a key aspect of any evaluation."

Encouraging Effective Evaluation Of Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities
OECD-DAC[356]

The term 'theory of change' can often be confusing for people working in peacebuilding in the field. In essence, it is the *logic* or *rationale* of a programme or intervention, including our chain of reasoning linking:

1. How we see the situation / understand the 'problem': What we understand / believe is the problem that needs to be addressed
2. What we believe is the *desired future* that we are trying to achieve
3. How we see the *specific goal* that we are trying to realise through our programmes / interventions, that we believe will contribute to that desired future
4. What needs to change / what types of change are needed to achieve that *specific goal*
5. What needs to be done to achieve that change: what actions / interventions / approaches can bring about and realise that change
6. And *why* we think doing that will achieve that change

All of these 6 steps may (and usually do) include unproven and untested 'assumptions' of *why* we see things the way we do and why we believe what we are doing will bring about the change we are working for. Incorrect understanding or analysis of any of these elements can affect whether a peacebuilding programme (or any policy or intervention) is or is not effective. This may be because:

• We are wrong or only partially correct in understanding what is causing / contributing to the situation;
• we try to achieve a 'future' that is not what is desired by parties in the conflict or is not acceptable to all parties in the conflict;
• the goal we set will not actually contribute to achieving that future or is not enough on its own;
• the types of change we are trying to achieve will not realistically bring about that goal (or are not enough on their own);
• *what* we are doing and *how* we are doing it will not actually achieve that change.

Making explicit the theories of change behind programmes and interventions and identifying and challenging the assumptions they may rest upon is a critical step in improving the design and strategy of peacebuilding programmes and other policies and measures to address conflicts and improve stability and security.

Searching for Peace in Iraq was not able to fully engage organisations and stakeholders involved in the conflict(s) in Iraq in identifying and assessing their 'theories of change'. This is, however, something which any organisation or agency involved in peacebuilding and addressing conflict issues in Iraq should do. The following list identifies a dramatically simplified version of 12 'theories' which have guided strategies and *approaches* to addressing the conflict adopted by different parties. Often stakeholders strategies have been shaped by one more of these 'logical frameworks':

1. **'Peace' through Imposed Democratic Change**
    Premise: Iraq was governed by an authoritarian regime. Removing this regime and imposing a democratic order will bring lasting peace and development to Iraq. *Critical Issues*: While the majority of Iraqis support and wish for a democratic regime and sovereign government, the *undemocratic* way in which this approach was implemented and the exclusion of Iraqi's from consultation and ownership at many stages of the process critically challenged this 'theory'. While democracy may in the long-run help support development and sustainable peace in Iraq, unless a system of governance which can protect the legitimate needs of all Iraqi communities and peoples can be developed, rule by the 'majority' or any group over another may contribute to continuing instability and violence.

2. **'Peace' through Solidifying / Re-Asserting Control**
    Premise: By (1) ensuring or (2) re-asserting the control of my community I can protect my community's interest. This is the best way to achieve a 'secure' peace. *Critical Issues*: Many communities in Iraq have been guided by strategies to try and protect their community from threats and violence from other communities. This has included process both to secure control and to try and *re-establish* control. Many Iraqis have recognized, however, that unless the needs and interests of *all* communities are addressed, 'peace through control' can lead to further violence. While it is essential for communities to know they are protected and will not be persecuted or excluded, it is also necessary to find a system of governance and addressing conflicts which can be inclusive.

3. **'Peace' through Driving Out Occupation**
    Premise: The war and sectarian violence in Iraq have been caused by a brutal and illegitimate occupation. Peace will come about through driving out the occupying force. *Critical Issues*: While the occupation and how it was carried out are key elements of the conflict in Iraq, this assessment too easily often ignores actual injustices, divisions and problems which existed in Iraq *before* the invasion and which have been intensified. Withdrawal of occupation / foreign military forces has contributed to reduced violence in many areas, but failure to address the actual deeper structural issues and contradictions within Iraq and underlying causes of internal conflicts could give rise to future violence and continuing instability.

4. **'Peace' through Addressing Key Critical Issues and Drivers of Conflict**
    Premise: There are actual key issues —such as disagreements over control of oil, territory, state power, etc— which are driving the conflict. Sustainable peace and stability can only be achieved if these issues are addressed. *Critical Issues*: Many of these issues have remained the most difficult to address, but are recognized by both Iraqis and internationals as key to building sustainable peace. Focus is often placed on key actors and political and social leaders involved in the disputes. While this is important, it may also require other complementary strategies to address how groups / communities relate to each other more broadly. 'Addressing critical issues' and key drivers of conflict, if it does not also include transforming underlying attitudes, relationships and healing from the violence which has happened over the past 30+ years, may deal with issues now while leaving intact the context to give rise to future conflicts and violence.

5. **'Peace' through Security**
Premise: Peace can be achieved through provision or re-establishment of security. *Critical Issues*: Security is key in Iraq and is one of the main concerns of Iraqi citizens. How that security is achieved, however, is critical. Equally important is whether the underlying issues giving rise to insecurity are addressed, or if the focus is only on 'military'/'policing' approaches to provision of security. Each community seeking to ensure its security without also addressing the security of others can sometimes contribute to greater overall insecurity and conflict relations.

6. **'Peace' through Leaders Agreeing and Working Together**
Premise: Much of the violence in Iraq is a result of corrupt, selfish or sectarian leadership which has fuelled and promoted sectarian violence to achieve its own interests. *Critical issues*: Many Iraqis see poor leadership as having contributed to the violence in Iraq and, in particular, to flaming sectarian tensions. This premise often includes the assumption that sectarianism is being imposed from above and that if there were better leadership the problems would be resolved. While many Iraqis agree that before the war Iraqi's —at a social level— lived together in peace, this was still at a time and in a context of massive violence being carried out against different communities. Given the wide-spread sectarian violence of the last several years, improved leadership is critical, but peacebuilding will also require processes to address the legacy and impact of violence and mistrust at the community and social level. Improved leadership is an important, but not a sufficient ingredient for peace.

7. **'Peace' through Institutional Development**
Premise: A major factor fuelling conflict in Iraq is weak institutions —including state, security and others. Reforming and improving the functioning of state institutions is critical to enabling peace and security. *Critical Issues*: Improving performance of state institutions is important for peace in Iraq. Improving the 'technical' capacity of state and security forces without addressing key aspects of the conflict and ensuring inclusion and representation, however, may simply solidify the conflict. Institutional development, without policies and measures to address conflict issues, may see the creation of stronger state and security forces, and the 'freezing' or entrenching of divisions.

8. **'Peace' through Promoting Nonviolence**
Premise: A main reason for the violence in Iraq is people's / communities' willingness to use violence. This creates a 'cycle' of violence, hatred and revenge killings. The way to break this cycle is to introduce nonviolence and to strengthen a nonviolent movement in Iraq uniting all Iraqis for a better future and to end sectarian violence and negative external intervention / control in the country. *Critical Issues*: Nonviolence, increasing the population's and all sectors of Iraqi society's resistance to sectarian violence, and raising awareness and capability for nonviolent solutions to conflicts is also an important element for peacebuilding in Iraq. Focus is particularly placed on drawing upon traditions, cultures, examples and approaches to nonviolence from within the cultures, religions and history of the people of Iraq. Promoting nonviolence though has to also include developing skills, capabilities and solutions for actually addressing the key issues giving rise to conflicts and violence in Iraq. If 'violence' is ended but the issues are not addressed, there can be strong chances that violence may re-assert itself in the future as well. Nonviolence also has to earn cultural legitimacy in Iraq and deal with the anger and hurt many Iraqis feel at the violence and trauma they've experienced.

9. **'Peace' through Dialogue Processes**
Premise: Spaces and process for dialogue which allow people to develop mutual understanding, overcome enemy images, and find mutually acceptable solutions to conflict issues can contribute to peace in Iraq. *Critical Issues*: Dialogue processes can be important and often —if done well— lead to individual / personal change and improving relations between those who participate. The key challenge is to see how to translate and link this into social, economic and political changes as well. If dialogues help to improve relationships but don't contribute to transforming the context and environment of the conflict, addressing actual grievances and resolving conflict issues, parties may eventually grow frustrated and leave the dialogues or return to violence.

Dialogue processes which only reach those involved and aren't able to impact broader dynamics of the conflict may also not have sufficient impact to contribute meaningfully to peace.

10. 'Peace' through Education and Training

Premise: Iraqis are exposed in many ways to violent messages, practices and culture. Overcoming violence, intolerance and sectarianism in Iraqi society requires peace education in schools and training people in skills and tools for transforming conflicts effectively. *Critical Issues*: Peace education and training can be important but they often fail to help people develop actual skills and capabilities for addressing conflict issues in their communities and society. Peace education courses may also shy away from addressing actual conflict issues. While education and training can be important for bringing about changes in attitudes, skills and knowledge, it has to be complimented by (or linked to) processes to actually address conflict issues.

11. 'Peace' through Justice

Premise: Peace can only be achieved if there is justice —if those who have carried out atrocities and violence, or if those who have contributed to corruption and abuse of power are held accountable. *Critical Issues*: Justice is a strong demand by many Iraqis. Knowing that those who carried out violence and atrocities are held to account is important for victims and survivors and to prevent these actions from happening in the future. How that 'justice' is achieved, however, is critical. Measures which are seen as unfair or prejudice against certain or entire communities— which are themselves seen as unjust —may fuel further violence. Rather than imposing certain models or approaches, how to realise justice in Iraq needs to be negotiated and agreed by Iraq's people and communities.

12. 'Peace' through Reconciliation

Premise: There needs to be reconciliation at all levels —inter-personal, community, intra-'sects', nationally, politically— for lasting peace in Iraq. *Critical Issues*: Many Iraqis want some form of 'reconciliation' while many still have strong feelings and lack of trust towards other communities from which they have experienced violence over the past years / decades. Calls for 'reconciliation' are strongly condemned by some who see this as excusing past actions. At the same time, particularly at the political level many Iraqis want to see their leaders working more effectively together to end violence, improve security and address critical issues facing the country. Reconciliation is an extremely complex and challenging process. Given the scale of violence Iraq has experienced, work to address this need to be undertaken with care, authentic and serious effort, and based fundamentally upon the values, cultures, traditions and what the people of Iraq want.

Theories of Change: Analysis

According to interviews: very few stakeholders explicitly identify the 'theories' guiding their approach to peace / security in Iraq. Most would identify with a combination of a few or several of the 'theories'. Many NGOs adopt the style of work they're doing based upon their particular skills set, opportunities available, or funding programmes —not because of deep reflection on the causes of violence in Iraq and what they believe would best contribute to peacebuilding if they had the option. Iraqi and international experts identified that those organisations making the most important and relevant contributions, however, are those with well thought through strategies. Clearly identifying and assessing assumptions and seeing how they may impact likelihood of effectively contributing to peace is important. Many donors and national and international organisations should more rigorously reflect upon the theories guiding their programmes and interventions in Iraq to see whether they are correct / appropriate, or what they may need to be revised.

Evaluation

The evaluation of peacebuilding initiatives and programmes presented here is based upon: (i) interviews with 100 stakeholders, experts and practitioners inside and outside of Iraq and (ii) review of key publications. While the section above included assessment by types of peacebuilding activities, this section is based upon an overall evaluation of peacebuilding work in Iraq. Items already addressed above, however, will not be repeated in detail. Where the same issues are taken up again it is to evaluate them in relation to how they contribute to the *impact* of peacebuilding programmes.

It should be noted that this was not a rigorous evaluation process. Researchers had limited access to actual project planning, monitoring and evaluation documents. The nature of the project did not allow on-site visits or participatory / interactive evaluations with those directly impacted by most projects. Both of these are key to proper evaluation. *SfP* researchers would also strongly recommend the importance of multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral *joint evaluation processes*, bringing different organisations and actors involved in peacebuilding together with local communities, leadership and others to evaluate and learn together from peacebuilding approaches in Iraq.

At the same time, the interviews themselves were conducted with experts and practitioners directly involved in many of these projects, and facilitated reflection on their own experiences as well as peacebuilding work in Iraq more broadly. One of the findings brought forward clearly through the interviews is that there is no single or homogenous 'quality' of projects in Iraq. Quite the opposite. The breadth of actors which has been involved and the wide-range of approaches to needs assessment, programme design, implementation and follow-through have provided a spectrum of projects from those which were assessed to be 'absolutely horrible' or with 'negative impact' and those which were seen as having made significant and valuable contributions to peacebuilding, conflict transformation, or improving capabilities for dealing with conflicts effectively. The reader should keep this in mind while reviewing the evaluation below. The assessment provided here draws directly upon key points identified in the interviews. While many may be true for a range of projects, it is not expected that they are accurate for all. The frequency with which these points were brought up by interviewees, however, indicates their relevance and importance to peacebuilding programmes in Iraq. The categories themselves were generated through reflective engagement with stakeholders interviewed as those most relevant for evaluating peacebuilding projects in Iraq. A few categories include 'good practice' notes afterwards drawing upon input from Iraqi and international experts.

Impact

One of the most important points to assess in peacebuilding projects is their impact on conflict dynamics and context. Interviewees noted that it is very difficult to evaluate impact of peacebuilding projects in Iraq, and indeed few projects had even attempted to. Factors contributing to this difficulty included:

- The context is challenging and complex, and many factors play a role in changing conflict dynamics. Attributing how a 'causal' impact to a project and distinguishing it from other contributing factors can be difficult;
- Few projects included base-line assessments to understand the context before intervention in order to be able to measure changes achieved through the project;
- Very few projects have space, time, resources or methodology for more rigorous evaluations to assess impact, or to engage with community and stakeholders to see if they feel there has been a broader impact;
- Many projects are designed with a focus on *outcomes* and *outputs* and little conception towards how they might directly contribute to *impact* more broadly. While many projects *aspire* to have such an impact, it is not built in to project design, planning and implementation

On the whole, interviewees judged that most peacebuilding projects **have very little impact** on conflict dynamics or the overall context. Referring to the **Designing for Impact** diagram above, while many projects achieved clear outputs and outcomes, clearly identifying what impact they had on the broader context and dynamics of the conflict or contributing to peace writ large was more difficult. This does not mean that peacebuilding projects in Iraq are not important or that they can't have meaningful impact. Indeed, several projects, such as those dealing with addressing disputed areas, could show direct impact on conflict dynamics as a result of their work. Instead, it is an indication that this approach and level of thinking has been absent in most projects, or that it has been implicitly assumed that work would have an impact, rather than consciously planned and designed for. Factors identified as *weakening* or *reducing* the impact which peacebuilding projects often have included:

- **Projects are often single sector / single community**: they have limited impact on peacebuilding because they do not engage with or bring together members of different communities;
- **Most projects have limited geographic coverage**: in areas where communities have already been separated this means they rarely reach across communities (as above), and there is limited engagement with the 'other' from other parts of Iraq;
- **Short-Term and One-Off**: Many / most projects are short-term and one-off. This is predominantly a result of donor funding. Projects do not have the time / scope to bring about meaningful change and then to sustain that change once achieved.
- **Not to scale**: many projects are very small in scale and do not engage at the levels needed to bring about meaningful change. 'Scaling-up' projects is very rarely done (though a small number of multi-year projects were cited as good examples in this regard. Most of these involved cooperation with international organisations which had long-term experience in peacebuilding and long-term engagement in Iraq.
- **Little Follow-through or follow-up**: linked with 'one-off' and short-term above, even where there are positive results of projects these are rarely sustained or followed-through as donor / NGO attention shifts elsewhere.
- **Little or no coordination**: The results of different projects or organisations rarely add up to 'cumulative impact' because there is little or no coordination. Very good projects might be carried out in the same area but with little linking, or carried out in the same area but at different times and with different stakeholders and not building upon or sustaining previous achievements. Short-term projects.
- **Almost complete absence of strategic planning**: a key factor for limited impact identified by many Iraqi NGOs was the almost complete lack of strategic planning for peacebuilding that could be identified at every level, from local NGOs to national authorities and international organisations and donors, most of whom it was said lacked clear strategies for peacebuilding
- **Vague / General focus**: another factor linked to this was that many NGOs worked on vague themes such as 'nonviolence', 'youth empowerment' or 'women's rights'. When organisations were able to develop more targeted and specific engagements, with clear and realistic identification of problems, what they wished to achieve and how they would do it, impact was often seen as greater.

Given the importance of each of these issues many of them were evaluated on their own and are discussed further below.

Good practice: Iraqi organisations identified the following-factors as critical for meaningful impact:

- Projects need to be rooted in a real understanding of the community and proper assessment of actual needs;
- To be successful, projects need to engage the community and relevant stakeholders, including the government. Stakeholders need to have confidence in and feel ownership of the project, and feel that it addresses their real needs.

- Confidence has to be built up over time. Short-term engagements don't build trust. Organisations need to sustain their presence and show real results over-time to earn people's trust and confidence. Only then will people really engage.

- Projects which bring change at the individual / personal level are important but this needs to also translate into *institutional* change if it's to have a lasting / sustainable impact.

- Results need to add up. Few organisations can contribute to meaningful impact on their own. It takes more work and time. For this reason, improved cooperation and coordination are essential, so that the efforts of one initiative can be supported and complemented by another, with the results of both adding up to cumulative impact.

- Real peacebuilding impact takes time. While results can be achieved quickly at times, to sustain this and translate it into meaningful impact sometimes takes years.

- To really have impact, organisations, donors, the government and national and international actors need to improve *strategic planning* and serious engagement for peacebuilding.

Strategy & Strategic Planning

One of the clearest 'dividing lines' identified by interviewees between projects which were evaluated as 'positive' / 'successful' and those seen as being 'negative' / 'unsuccessful' was that of strategy. Iraqi organisations and experts assessed that very few national or international organisations rigorously engage in quality strategic planning to guide their programmes and interventions. At times it was asked / questioned if many organisations even have strategies for peacebuilding. For the European Commission and UN, clear strategies could be identified for issues such as sanitation, but not for peacebuilding as such. This was seen to impact the effectiveness of these organisations in supporting peacebuilding work in Iraq. Many donors also lack clear strategies for peacebuilding based upon rigorous assessment of need and clear identification of goals and objectives. It was often stated that organisations seem to do what they do because they feel / believe it's important or because funding is available, not because they have a clear strategy. NGOs which have survived the changing contexts in Iraq and which have generally had greater success and impact on the communities they work in were seen as having clearly thought out strategies which appropriately addressed real needs and issues in the community. Several Iraqi NGO experts noted that people work hard to have a strategy, but as funds are lean often find themselves having to implement short-term actions and general interventions responding to donor funding and shifting donor priorities. Others noted that while extensive training has focused on issues such as 'training', 'project management', 'how to write a press release', very little training or capacity building has gone in-depth into how to develop effective strategies for peacebuilding programmes and interventions. Key points mentioned on evaluation of peacebuilding strategies included:

- Most NGOs do not have clear peacebuilding strategies even when this is the main area they engage with. They have 'project' and 'activity' approaches. This is because his is how they know how to work and what donors support.

- The government does not appear to have a Ministry-specific or a 'whole-of-government' approach, framework or strategy for peacebuilding, national reconciliation or armed violence reduction. This creates a lack of continuity where engagements have to be lobbied for and built up each time. Government bodies exist —the Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation, NGO Assistance Office, Civil Society Committee of the Council of Representatives— but no *strategy or framework* for peace consolidation and national reconciliation.

- There is a clear lack of a joined-up strategy for their work amongst international organisations and donors. There is often duplication or limited or no cooperation and coordination between efforts.

- In addition to the absence of strategies at the organisational level, there is an absence of sectoral strategies when it comes to peacebuilding, eg. on community-based peacebuilding, local authorities and peacebuilding, media and peacebuilding,

engagement with religious leaders and peacebuilding, etc. While many good individual initiatives exist in each of these areas and while single organisations may have good strategies, there do not appear to be *sectoral strategies* jointly developed by multiple-stakeholders working on specific sectors.

• Together with the lack of NGO, Government, INGO, Donor and Sectoral peacebuilding strategies, there is also a lack at the 'regional' and 'national' level: where the strategies of different organisations working in a region or nationally would be 'integrated' to see how they contribute to an overall strategic direction and prioritisation for peacebuilding in Iraq

Good practice: While the absence of strategic planning was seen as a key issue overall, there were also several examples of organisations which engaged in rigorous strategic planning. This included:

• Rigorous and well-carried out needs assessments to understand the context and what needed to be done;

• Clear identification *with* stakeholders of the aims and objectives of the project / programme;

• Drawing upon lessons identified and lessons-learned from previous experience and engagements;

• Identifying the best methods and approaches to achieve the goals of the project

The quality with which each of these steps were done and fed into programme implementation was key.

Project Planning & Development

Interviews noted a general absence or low-level of capability for project planning and development. Organisations which were better developed had very strong planning and development capabilities. Many organisations, however, had worked mainly as 'implementers' and had a lack of staff and organisational capability for planning. This was seen as affecting the quality of their work. It was said in several interviews that this had been a greater problem in the period 2003 – 2007 when there had been an initial flowering of NGOs and CSOs. Now that numbers are reducing, it is often those organisations with better planning capabilities that have remained. It was noted, however, that capability for planning is not even throughout.

Monitoring & Evaluation

A number of organisations spoke of being 'sick and tired' of monitoring and evaluation as it was not seen as contributing to meaningful changes in programme design and implementation. Those that did it often did so at the insistence of their donors. Very few organisations working in peacebuilding per se engaged in rigorous or systematic monitoring and evaluation of their projects. For many, monitoring consisted of reports that events had taken place and how many people participated. Where evaluation had been done it was often 'off-site' or with 'experts' brought in very quickly, often without visiting the actual sites of the projects. Assessment of changes achieved and evaluation of impact was rare to non-existent. For most, 'evaluation' was seen as a necessary box to check for completing project reports, but was not engaged in as a learning process to see what worked, what hadn't worked, why, and how could future programmes and efforts be improved. For organisations which had long-term engagement in peacebuilding in Iraq (national and international), clear improvement in peacebuilding approaches was visible over time —based upon cumulative experience gathered. For most organisations and agencies, however, monitoring and evaluation were rarely done and when they were done were not integrated into *strategic learning*. It was noted also that very few international organisations carry out proper monitoring and evaluation of their work and there has been little to no monitoring of donor support for peacebuilding to see what impact it has had, examples of good practice, and what needs to be improved.

Resources and Good Practice for Monitoring and Evaluation

Excellent resources for monitoring and evaluation now exist, including Search for Common Ground's Designing for Results, the UNDP Handbook on P*lanning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results* and the OECD-DAC *Guidelines on Encouraging Effective Evaluation of Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities*. There are also many creative and effective ways monitoring and evaluation can be done. Good practice has shown that it is essential to integrate M&E into project planning, development, design and implementation processes, and to plan it from the start of the project. Dedicated time and clear methods need to be set aside for how to do M&E. Engagement with and inclusion of stakeholders in the process, as well as project implementing staff, is essential to draw out meaningful lessons and to strengthen reflective practice. Results and 'lessons learned' should also be shared broadly and not just held within a single organisation, to improve quality of peacebuilding overall.

Capabilities

A small number of Iraq organizations were seen as having built upon strong capabilities over the years. In terms of knowledge and understanding of the situation on the ground and professional capability, these were often higher than those of their international counterparts. At the same time, Iraqi analysts assessed that most NGOs in Iraq working in peacebuilding have very limited capabilities. Many NGOs exist only in name have little experience or trained staff. At the other end o the spectrum are highly expert and professional organisations, such as REACH led by Mr. Dana Hassan in Northern Iraq. Engaging mainly in development and relief projects they have built up an exceptional level of expertise and capability. It was said that organisations such as REACH, given their strong ties in communities, could also be useful in supporting on-the-ground community-based peacebuilding efforts. While a tremendous amount has been invested in capacity-building programmes, the systemic challenges with how these was implemented (assessed above under 'Training') have led to a situation in which many organisations today still have a relatively low level of capacity. This was said to be more of an issue in the South of Iraq and certain governorates than in the North.

Good practice: Real capabilities development takes sustained engagement over time and the ability to retain qualified staff (rather than losing them to emigration or to international organisations). Basic one-off trainings can be important but are not enough. Organisations need to develop internal capacity building approaches for their staff and not depend on external programmes. Capabilities development also includes much more than training, and involves development of working methodologies and procedures and experience on the ground and in communities. It was noted that some NGOs have developed very good capabilities for reporting, accounting and project development towards donors and international partners, but may have less actual capabilities for working for real change on the ground in their communities. The most effective organisations were seen as those who had built up strong ties in their communities and had real *added value* knowledge, resources and capabilities which they could contribute.

Independence

Iraqi and international interviewees suggest that very few NGOs in Iraq are independent. Many are associated with political parties or factions, while others are seen as being depending upon external donors. Affiliation with religious actors or communities in no way implies lack of effective capability and important work. Indeed many of the most effective organisations for meeting social and humanitarian needs were often seen to be those with close ties to different factions. This, sometimes, however, can limit their ability to contribute to peacebuilding. The value of 'single-identity' organisations or organisations closely identified with a particularly community is that they can work *with that community* on peacebuilding. Special efforts, however, then need to be made to link them with other communities or organisations working with other communities. Perceived lack of independence was seen as a major factor affecting how organisations were accepted and trusted by communities. NGOs seen as being too closely aligned with external actor interests, while often recipients

of substantial funding, were confronted with doubts about the extent to which they operate independently or in the best interest of the community / country.

Acceptability, Legitimacy and Trust
Acceptability, legitimacy and trust were identified as key issues relating to the impact and effectiveness of peacebuilding organisations in Iraq. It was noted by many interviewees that a lack of trust been built up over years under the former regime and during the sectarian violence in Iraq. There was said to be:

- A lack of trust within many organisations between different staff;
- A lack of trust between organisations who often see each other as competition for funds and resources;
- A lack of trust between communities and NGOs where communities often see NGOs as recipients and beneficiaries of foreign funds;
- A lack of trust between NGOs and Government, where government often doesn't consider NGOs as credible or serious actors and where NGOs may have significant reservations regarding integrity, competence and professionalism of government bodies;
- A lack of trust between national and international NGOs, where many international NGOs have prejudices or stereotypes towards national Iraqi organisations and sometimes question their lack of capability, motivation and integrity (often with little on the ground knowledge of or experience of NGOs in Iraq), and where Iraqi organisations often question the integrity, intentions and motivation of international NGOs

Many organisations were seen to have lost legitimacy with communities because they were seen as being 'puppets' of the occupation or financially benefitting from their ties with foreign donors. It was said that several organisations found it more 'acceptable' to take funds from European or other non-US donors as several US donors were perceived negatively or seen as being too close to the occupation. Another factor affecting trust between NGOs and communities was seen to be a possible 'urban' bias. Many NGOs are made up predominantly of staff from urban areas. The educational level of those working in NGOs is often higher, with many NGOs made up of staff with university degrees or possibly still in university. It was said that this sometimes leads to a bias on the part of NGOs who may have certain prejudices towards populations in rural areas or traditional tribal structures.

Good practice: Iraqi interviewees and internationals working long-term in Iraq strongly emphasize the critical importance of *earning* acceptance, legitimacy and trust. This isn't something organisations should just expect to have, but something the need to earn over time. Interviewees suggested the need to take time to build up relations. To involve people and partners in decision-making and planning processes. To be transparent with funds and intentions. It was said that good organisations earn the confidence of their partners and the communities they work in through the quality of their work. Speaking of international partners Iraqi organisations emphasized that its importance they show seriousness and real efforts to understand the particular context and situation in Iraq. Long-term rather than one-off engagements are important. Showing that they are serious about their engagement and continuing over time were seen as contributing to trust. Another key factor was seen to be the *integrity* of the individuals and organisations involved: that they were not just there for their enthusiasm, interests or personal profit but showed an authentic commitment to working with people in Iraq and *respect* for their knowledge, experience and capabilities.

Stakeholder Engagement
The extent to which stakeholders are engaged in planning, implementation and evaluation of projects is important and varies widely. Government engagement was seen as critical by many organisations —both because they can enable work to be done and because they have key responsibility for addressing conflict issues. It was pointed out, however, that many organisations expect government support but don't work to engage them from the beginning. It was suggested that both government and NGOs need to become much

better at engaging and cooperating with each other. Level of stakeholder engagement of communities was suggested to be, at least in part, a result of how much the project is addressing their real needs. If the project addresses real needs of importance to the community they will get involved. Several experienced Iraqi NGO experts, however, noted that very few Iraqi organisations actively try to engage communities as the ultimate owners and partners of projects. 'Engagement' is often limited to interviews, brief / perfunctory meetings, and service-delivery to beneficiaries. It was also noted that this was true of most international NGO and donor engagement: where priorities for their projects are predominantly set *outside* Iraq and not through real engagement with key partners and stakeholders in Iraq. Overall, *stakeholder engagement* in most peacebuilding projects was seen as limited and was cited as a key issue impacting sustainability of results.

Good practice: Good projects cited were seen as ones which dedicated extensive time to *meaningful* and *authentic stakeholder* engagement. Not just 'meeting' and 'participation' in activities, but *actively engaging stakeholders* in defining objectives and *how* projects should be implemented —as well as directly in the implementation of projects themselves. Good practice between national and international organisations was cited as when international organisations base their engagements not on *their* preconceived objectives and priorities but upon listening to and working with Iraqi partners and stakeholders to define the scope and objectives of their support.

Do No Harm
A number of peacebuilding engagements were seen as having done significant harm. This was most often the case when funds were provided by donors with little accountability, contributing to corruption within the sector. NGOs which were seen to be 'using up funds' but not contributing to real work were also cited as having damaged the reputation of NGOs as a sector. The same was also cited when NGOs were seen as being too close to the occupation authorities or particular factions. Here, 'harm' was predominantly in relation to impacting trust and credulity of organisations. It was also said though that, given the context in Iraq, national and international organisations should pay particular attention to how their operations impact the security of both staff and communities they work with. A number of interviewees cited having had to leave a part of Iraq or the country because of their work.

Good practice: Donors, international NGOs and national organisations should include risk assessments and mitigation strategies in their work. While this is done by many it is definitely not done by all. Identifying risks, however, is not enough. Several interviewees spoke of the need for 'creativity' to see how perceived risks could actually be turned into peacebuilding opportunities.

Scale and Geographical Coverage
A particular issue noted in several interviews is that very few organisations in Iraq are nation-wide or working across different governorates. This impacts their ability to work on peacebuilding more broadly. Very few international NGOs work at a national or multi-governorate level as well. It was also noted that the 'scale' of most projects was too small to have meaningful impact beyond the immediate locality or stakeholders directly impacted.

Follow-Through & Continuity
A clear challenge affecting many projects is the lack of follow-through and continuity. Interviewees cited many cases where projects had good results, but nothing was sustained past the termination of the project. Few donors seemed to give attention to follow-through on the results of projects. Many projects are implemented with 6 month time frames leaving limited opportunity either for meaningful results or follow-through after the project is completed. At the same time, those peacebuilding projects cited as having the best impact were often ones carried out over two, three, four or more years. An evaluation of peacebuilding programmes by USIP pointed to the need for multi-year sustained engagements and follow-through to achieve impact.[357]

Good practice: Iraqi and international interviewees both cited the need to plan projects with a focus on follow-through and continuity: what 'next' steps or stages might be needed and how will the results or work achieved in the project continue after the end of the project itself.

Sustainability

This relates directly to sustainability. *SfP* evaluated sustainability on two levels:

•   Sustainability of Results
•   Sustainability of Engagement

Interviewees noted that there were many good results from individual projects but these were often not sustained. Again this had to do with funding, shifting priorities, and lack of long-term planning. As with 'follow-through and continuity' it was said that national and international organisations don't assess how the work or results of what they have done will continue afterwards —once the project is completed. Lack of planning, design, funding and engagement to *sustain* the results of good projects was seen as meaning that a lot of time, funding and efforts were wasted. The lack of sustainability was identified as a major factor contributing to reduced impact. Again, the distinction between changes at an 'individual' / 'personal' level and achieving *structural* and *institutional* change was cited by many.

This was directly linked also with sustainability of engagement. Organisations were often not able to build upon results of their work because they needed to shift focus due to shifting donor interests. They also faced challenges with high turnover of staff, affecting sustainability of work on a programme and project level. Of particular concern is also the fact that many donors and international organisations seem to be drawing down their engagement in Iraq. How this will affect the ability of Iraqi organisations to keep working was raised by both national and international interviewees.

Networking, Coordination & Cooperation

The issue of networking, coordination and cooperation has already been extensively reviewed above. When asked about 'weaknesses' and 'gaps' in peacebuilding work in Iraq the absence of effective cooperation and coordination —between actors at the same level and across tracks— was frequently cited. Some key issues raised included:

•   **Vertical and Horizontal Gaps**: There is little cooperation between organisations working at the same level (horizontally) and between levels (vertically). This ranges from complete lack of knowledge about the work being carried out by others to the total absence of communication or exploration of how efforts might be mutually supportive. At the level of international organisations and agencies not directly on the ground in Iraq there often appeared to be a significant lack of knowledge of what initiatives actually existed inside Iraq. At the level of local and national organisations, there was often a lack of knowledge or resources and initiatives at different levels which could have supported them in their work.

•   **Government-NGO Cooperation**: As above, Government – NGO cooperation is often limited, particularly on peacebuilding issues. It was said that government engages when then feel they need to or will benefit, but it was also pointed out that few NGOs systematically work to engage with government bodies as partners.

•   **Funding Fuels Competition and Division, Not Cooperation**: Funding mechanisms were often cited as fuelling competition between NGOs and initiatives rather than supporting improved networking, cooperation and coordination.

•   **Competing Networks**: It was noted that there are now at least 6 different 'mini-networks' of organisations working on peacebuilding, nonviolence and related fields. While it can be beneficial to have networks which link members on very specific issues, it was also suggested by many Iraqis interviewed that it would be beneficial to have some sort of network / platform / framework that could help to bring together people

working on peacebuilding and conflict issues from *different* approaches as well to learn from and with each other.

- **Lack of a shared 'big picture' approach**: It was also said that NGOs do not have a 'bigger picture' approach. Many focus on their specific projects and activities but not how their work links together with others towards larger, common objectives.

- **International Example**: Many Iraqi and international experts cited the 'bad example' often set by international organisations who in many cases have limited, poor or no coordination of their efforts. This ranges from donors to organisations implementing programmes in Iraq.

- **Domination, not Cooperation**: Several Iraqi NGOs also noted that many networks seem to be set up for 'larger' organisations or personalities in them to gain in stature and influence or to become 'gate-keepers' between the network and foreign partners and organisations. Single organisations or individuals are seen as 'key actors' and donors and foreign partners normally meet with them to evaluate how the work and programmes are going. The actual 'network members' are often rarely involved, do not feel authentic ownership of the networks, and frequently do not see how the network directly benefits their work or contributes to improved cooperation and *joint* engagement.

Lack of coordination and cooperation was also seen to contribute to duplication of efforts as well as disjointed efforts.

Good practice: Many Iraqi and international organisations and experts recognized that this is a good point in Iraq's development to move towards increasing coordination and cooperation and improved networking. Some positive achievements have been attained. The work of organisations like NCCI —a network of many organisations— was cited as a positive example. When asked to identify 'good practice' elements which could contribute to better networking, coordination and cooperation interviewees cited:

- Joint or shared conflict and situation analysis: rather than each organisation doing their analysis in a 'silo' there should be greater efforts at bringing actors together for intense 'sharing' of their assessments and improving understanding of the situation from different angles;

- Joint Planning and Strategy Development Sessions: These could be sectoral —bringing together people working on the same issues or approaches— or geographical —bringing together organisations working on different issues but in the same geographical area. These sessions should facilitate organisations sharing their strategies and joint strategic and planning processes;

- Real Ownership and Value: to make networking worthwhile, organisations and members need to feel that the network is really addressing issues of importance to them, brings a clear added value, and that they have a say as members.

Funding

Any evaluation of peacebuilding programmes in Iraq should also include an evaluation of funding. This has already in part been carried out above though a much more comprehensive evaluation which should be conducted with multiple-stakeholders —something which is beyond the scope of this report— is needed. This should include identification of positive funding experiences (and how they worked) and negative. Key points already noted elsewhere in this report include:

- Funding streams are often separate and disconnected, even when addressing related areas;

- Few donors have plans / strategies for peacebuilding or how to support it;

- Many donors maintain a short-term project focus which is not conducive to quality project implementation in Iraq;

- Many donors lack a long-term commitment to follow-through on results and achievements;

- The funding practice of many donors and international organisations in the immediate post-invasion period in 2003 contributed significantly to corruption in the field. Much of this has substantially improved since 2008;

- Few donors support multi-governorate or national project level work which can impact upon the 'scale' possible for peacebuilding projects

- Funding has often contributed to increased competition amongst organisations in Iraq rather than cooperation. This phenomenon has also been experienced elsewhere. Donors should evaluate possible negative impacts of their programmes and learn from positive experience on how to address these.

Good practice: Good practice lessons include the importance of donors working with stakeholders and partners on the ground to set medium- to long-term objectives, the importance of multi-year programme support and funding for follow-through, the need for improved coordination and cooperation amongst donors and the critical value of having well developed, well-designed *peacebuilding strategies* for donors.

In Case of Crisis
How projects deal with and address 'crisis' was also raised in several *SfP* interviews. Interviewees noted that few organisations have 'planned' for crisis but many of them know how to deal with it because they are doing so on a daily basis. The types of crisis organisations may face very depending upon where they are in the country and have changed over time. These have included:

- Kidnapping, targeting or killing of staff or partners;

- Attacks on vehicles or buildings;

- Theft;

- Outbreak of violence in areas in which the organisations are working

It was noted that many of these crisis are predictable and foreseeable given the context the organisations are working in. Several organisations cited that practical measures can be done to reduce risk, such as reaching out to all partners, investing in developing confidence and trust with stakeholders, and being transparent in working methods. At the same time, the lack of formalized identification of possible risks and joint planning for how to address crisis may sometimes weaken response capacity. It was said that there is little capacity for NGOs to coordinate and cooperate together in response to possible crisis. This varies significantly to what was witnessed in Kenya following the 2007 elections where close cooperation amongst actors and stakeholders at many levels helped to reduce the impact of violence there. Improved ability to manage, prevent, and reduce the impact of crisis should be planned for, and can be improved by better coordination and cooperation as well.

Security
A number of organisations, particularly in the south and centre, continue to face security issues. This at times restricts the scope of their work. Many international organisations also continue to cite security as a key factor for why they cannot be directly based in Iraq. This has a direct impact on the quality of the work they are doing and leads to often limited / short-term engagements and partial understanding of the situation.

Additional Issues
Two additional issues were cited in interviews as having a key impact on peacebuilding work in Iraq:

1. On the whole there is a generally very low level of knowledge / understanding of what peacebuilding is. While there are a few individuals and organisations who have built up a strong understanding of one or another aspect of peacebuilding, on the whole —amongst government officials, civil servants, political parties, media, the general

population and most NGOs— there is very little understanding of peacebuilding and the work of organisations involved in peacebuilding. Iraqi organisations and their international partners should be aware of this and see to what extent they may need to work to support improved understanding of peacebuilding amongst key partners and stakeholders;

2. There is a need for increased trans-sectarian engagement. Many religious and political leaders are often not speaking to all Iraqis but only to their followers / identity group. The same can be seen by many NGOs which speak only to their direct constituencies — sometimes defined along religious / sectarian lines. NGOs, social, political and religious leaders should do more to reach out to and engage with Iraqis *across / beyond* sectarian identities.

Final Evaluation Note

This is an all too brief 'evaluation' of key issues affecting peacebuilding work in Iraq as identified through *SfP* interviews. A more rigorous assessment than that allowed in the scope of this project is required. This should include a broad range of Iraqi actors and organisations as well as their international counterparts, and should aim towards making visible the *assumptions* underlying approaches to peacebuilding in Iraq and to what extent they are appropriate / relevant. Given the number of years and breadth of engagement, and the importance of the issue in Iraq, it would also be valuable to have a more comprehensive and inclusive process of evaluating and identification of key lessons learned with more consistent engagement by the actual organisations and actors involved as well as the communities in which they are working and the broader range of stakeholders affected. A follow-up or further research work of this kind could valuably contribute to improving the quality of peacebuilding work done in Iraq and help organisations, communities, practitioners, the government and international donors and organisations better identify how they can support sustainable peacebuilding in the country.

While the points identified above are those brought forward by primarily Iraqi experts, social, religious, academic, political and other leaders themselves, no report on peacebuilding efforts in Iraq would be complete if it failed to note the extraordinary integrity, dedication, commitment and selfless effort of many working in this field in Iraq. Iraq has been devastated by armed violence for many years. While the situation is generally seen as gradually improving, the challenges are still many. Iraqis working in peacebuilding, armed violence reduction and prevention, and to foster healing and reconciliation should be applauded, and their efforts supported. The entire *SfP* research team thanks them for their efforts, commitment and courage, and for the time and availability those working in the field gave to support this research project.

Brief Report on NGOs

The following 'report on NGOs' was provided in an internal *SfP* Research Report from 2010. The author has extensive experience working with NGOs in Iraq and has written previously published reports on the NGO sector in Iraq. While a number of the points cited refer to earlier periods of NGO operations in Iraq they have left a lasting impression and how NGOs are perceived. The report therefore provides a lens on how NGOs and their work are seen in Iraq. Much of the focus is also on international NGOs working in Iraq:

"Because of the bad security situation since 2003, NGOs protect themselves in different ways. At the same time the create problems for their staff and for the people whom they are dealing with. Unfortunately, some of the NGOs are often making a bad situation even worse. This is the case for most NGOs in Iraq. Below are some of these problems:

- Most NGOs vehicles have the sign "Stay back 100 meters." This is done for their security. People cannot understand why peacebuilders that seek to build bridges with the communities are using these kinds of armed vehicles! People in these communities often say that these NGOs still do not trust them. They find this an inconsistency and it has meant that NGOs have failed to move forward with peace processes and community development. On the other hand, those vehicles are always targeted by the insurgents, and whoever cooperates with them will be targeted also.

- The security companies who are accompanying the international NGOs have created very bad incidents while they are travelling with the client. Their convoys frequently attacked whoever they suspect. This kind of convoy was targeted by the insurgents and whoever dealt with them was targeted also.

- Some of the NGOs established secure compounds among the civilian houses in the Cities, paying almost double the normal prices for renting these houses for their offices or their accommodation; this made the rent too high for the people of this area. The neighbours are often complaining, not only because of this problem, but because the NGOs became subject to violence from insurgents and the neighbours also became victims. This can make the civilians in these areas complain and to do what they can to frighten these NGOs and move them from this area.

- Other NGOs are working in safe and accessible areas and neglecting others. For example, In Kirkuk and in Mosul Governorates, most of the NGOs are working in the Kurdish part because it is safer and neglecting the Arab area which is seen as 'not safe'. This kind of neglect is causing problems for these NGOs. They are accused by the Arabs of supporting the Kurds only, or trying to bring more Kurds to change the demography of the city. These assumptions and the reality of the NGOs working in safe areas are putting the staff at risk and making the tension worse between the two parts of the city.

- Working remotely ether from the Green Zone in Baghdad or from Kurdistan Regional Government is another problem for the field staff. It is too difficult for the field staffs that are living in other Governorates to travel frequently to the main offices in these areas to meet the managers. To reach the main offices the staff has to pass many Governorates and communities, militia and check points. Most of these check points are not legal, in this kind of check point if they recognize the NGO employees they maybe killed or else arrested and their family will be asked to pay a ransom[358]. Even if the victims have been released after they paid the ransom, the victim will be a valuable commodity for other insurgent groups because they will hear that this person is able to pay and so will be keen to kidnap them again.

Because of all this, NGOs have got a bad reputation. The reputation of humanitarians in Iraq is almost the same as in Afghanistan. NGOs can not reach parts of the country because of the security threats, accusations of squandering funds for many unnecessary things, and of carrying weapons but wearing civilian clothes.[359]

The type of NGOs' program is another problem for its staff. Not all the programs can be

implemented in all areas in Iraq. Some of the programs might divide the communities and increase the conflict. As a result, their staff has been threatened and they become under risk. To explore some of these cases I have the two examples below:

1. Microfinance and small business loans are one of the programs that some of the NGOs are implementing under USAID fund, like Al Thiqa and Al Ezdehar.[360] These NGOs provides loans to Iraqis for small businesses. Although these kinds of programs have helped many Iraqis make sustainable businesses, but to obtain a loan from these Organizations and return it with interest is forbidden in Islam, and Muslims are the majority in Iraq. Moreover, these Organizations are using the clients' property as security on the loan. This has made Mullahs in Mosques start to advice and encourages Muslims not to take any benefit from these Organizations or any other Organization who have the same system of work. Also to submit any kind of documents relating to the Iraqi people properties made Mullahs as well as most of the other religious' leaders believe that these Organizations are Jewish, want to steal the Iraqi lands and maybe Iraq will be another Palestine.

Although these Organizations are still working in Iraq, they have been attacked many times during their operation. Staff is threatened and their offices have been moved many times in most of Iraq Governorates.

2. Many of the religious NGOs are authentically humanitarian, but at the same time they are neglecting the other religions.[361] In Iraq, some of the International NGOs came to work under secular, Christian or Islamic missions, which makes the division between the Muslim and Christian communities' worse. Some of Muslims in the region had a very bad reaction towards these organizations and their staff and sometimes to its beneficiaries.[362] For example, whenever there is a bomb exploded in any church, many of Christian aid organizations such as the Southern Baptist Convention, Christian Aid, Christian Peacemaker Teams and Samaritan's Purse will come to help the injured people and rehabilitate the Church. Although these NGOs are doing some other humanitarian assistance to other religions' groups, but because of their names and missions, staff are always at risk. Some of the Muslims often thought that these NGOs have hidden Agenda.[363]

NGOs' programs, mission, and work strategies are sensitive issues in conflict zones. In divided communities, people believe what they see —they are not part of the NGO to understand their activities. Communities play a role in making specific NGO's reputation good or bad. With the absence of security, community leaders such as Sheikhs and Mullas, have a role to make the communities cooperate with NGOs. Without this collaboration, the NGOs and its staff will be under threat.

Swot analysis: at a glance

An extraction of key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing peacebuilding work in Iraq cited in SfP interviews. Sometimes the results may seem contradictory. Something may be cited as a 'strength' and its opposite listed as a 'weakness'. This is because there is not homogeneity of peacebuilding capabilities or approaches in Iraq but a wide-range of quality, with the majority being very poor or low quality and some having developed a very high degree of capability and expertise.

STRENGTHS Identified in interviews and analysis:	WEAKNESSES Key weaknesses have been outlined above. These include:
• There are a number of organisations which have built up strong, credible track records and earned trust of communities and partners based upon the quality and results of their work; • A large number of Iraqis have been engaged in or exposed to peacebuilding and conflict transformation trainings and programmes. This has led to an increase in capability for many and several highly qualified experts; • Several major national and international organisations recognize the importance of addressing key conflict drivers and unresolved disputed issues. UNAMI and several international and national organisations are engaging to address this; • There has been a gradual learning and qualitative improvement of programmes and approaches amongst several actors; • A small number of international NGOs working with conflict issues and peacebuilding in Iraq have now been engaged in the country for a number of years. They have built up strong tack records, good partnerships, gained deep insight and understanding and earned trust; • There is an increasing recognition amongst a wide-spectrum of organisations and stakeholders of the need for improved cooperation and coordination of efforts; • There appears to be an authentic interest amongst several donors, international organisations and UN agencies to see how they can better contribute to peacebuilding in Iraq; • Of major importance: there is a growing exhaustion with violence amongst many Iraqis of all backgrounds and all parts of the country; • There is a gradually growing experience and capability for advocacy and lobbying for policy and institutional change; • There is a high degree of analytical, organisational and intellectual capability on many fronts in Iraq, and rich cultural resources which can be drawn upon to contribute to peacebuilding	• Short-term one-off projects with limited impact and unrealistic project time-frames (eg. '6 months' projects for peacebuilding); • Lack of strategic planning and over-reliance upon 'project' approach; • Often weak stakeholder engagement; • Poor sustainability of most projects; • Lack of strong capacity at government level, including absence of a strategic framework or ministerial action plans for peacebuilding and addressing conflict issues; includes reticence on the part of government to engage with NGO peacebuilding programmes; • Limited geographical scope of most projects; • Limited 'scale' of most projects; • Poor networking and general lack of coordination and cooperation amongst organisations working in peacebuilding; • Lack of trust and confidence in NGOs and organisations working in peacebuilding on the part of the broad population; this includes the poor perception many people have of NGOs; • Predominance of imposing donor agendas and interest of external NGOs; insufficient attention to building up roots of peacebuilding within Iraq and drawing from Iraqi knowledge, expertise, customs, traditions and learning; • Over-reliance by external actors and Iraqi government on 'security' approaches which often worsen insecurity rather than contribute to peacebuilding; • Outstanding key disputed issues and conflict drivers which, if not effectively addressed, can contribute to further violence; • Lack of a clear national vision for the future of Iraq; • Lack of authentic, sustained processes for national reconciliation, healing and addressing the legacy and impact of the last 30 years in Iraq; • Key outstanding weaknesses in governance, political parties, and service delivery in Iraq contributing to a situation of continuing instability and lack of confidence by many

OPPORTUNITIES Key Opportunities identified in interviews include:

- Draw upon the growing frustration with violence in Iraq to place a greater emphasis on peacebuilding and effective violence reduction;

- Proactively engage with key sectors in Iraq, including religious and tribal leaders, academics, media, artists, and others whose voices can encourage and support peacebuilding and reconciliation;

- Integrate peacebuilding and armed violence prevention and reduction programmes into local and national government policies and planning;

- Gather and make visible success stories and peacebuilding initiatives by Iraqis from across the country – increasing the visibility of what's being done and what can be done by Iraqis themselves for peace in Iraq;

- Build upon the signs of inter-party, cross-sectarian politics in Iraq to support more *issues-based* rather than *sectarian-based* governance;

- Draw upon the lessons learned in peacebuilding and programme; implementation over the past several years to improve the quality of future work;

- Develop a multi-stakeholder strategic planning process to identify key priorities for peacebuilding in Iraq and to improve coordination and cooperation amongst key sectors;

- Develop a clear funding strategy for peacebuilding in Iraq including sectoral and short, medium and long-term objectives and funding mechanisms;

- Support improved coordination and networking, with focus on increased cooperation and improved quality of peacebuilding programmes;

- Make more readily available, in Arabic and Kurdish, resources and materials on peacebuilding, nonviolence and conflict transformation in Iraq;

- Engage Iraqi experts to provide training and programmes in universities to support sharing of knowledge and expertise;

- Introduce peace education at all levels of schools in Iraq

THREATS Identified in interviews and analysis:

- Gradual drawdown and reduction in funding and support for Iraqi organisations may impact their ability to support and contribute to peacebuilding work in the country. Lack of understanding of peacebuilding or political support for peacebuilding amongst donors and international actors may contribute to reduced support;

- The possibility of increasing authoritarianism may contribute to reduced space for authentic civil society efforts in Iraq;

- There is real possibility of 'stasis' and 'stagnation' rather than improvement in peacebuilding projects unless concerted efforts are made by organisations involved (nationally and internationally) and donors;

- Burn out and exhaustion remains a factor for some working in peacebuilding in Iraq and can lead experienced practitioners to draw back after a while;

- If disputed issues and areas are not resolved this can contribute to instability and either continuing low-level or escalated violence in the future;

- Possible worsening security situation in specific areas may increase violence and reduce space of action for peacebuilding organisations;

- External and regional dynamics and interventions can negatively impact upon and contribute to instability in Iraq;

- Failure to improve quality of service delivery could lead to increasing frustration and loss of confidence by Iraqis in the governance and political system;

- No honest / real processes to address the impact of sectarian violence and the last 30 years may develop. Divisions, suffering, pain, anger, and blame might continue and fester and lay the ground for future waves of violence;

- Failure to improve coordination and cooperation may lead to continuation of projects which don't realise the full impact they could make or the full impact necessary;

PART 4

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are recommendations brought forward from *SfP* interviews on how to improve consolidation of peace and reduction and prevention of armed violence in Iraq. This is only a partial listing. More extensive consultations and joint-review of lessons learned should be carried out with organizations and stakeholders in Iraq to identify key recommendations for going forward. Multi-Stakeholder Planning Processes in different parts of Iraq and then coming together nationally could be an effective way of building consensus and engagement around identification of key recommendations. It is hoped that the recommendations included here may contribute to that process. Organizations and stakeholders are invited and encouraged to review these and develop them further, adding their own recommendations and sharing them broadly.

Improve Needs Assessment & Goal Setting

Needs Assessment is broadly done by many organizations however interviewees suggested that significant improvements could be made by sharing and implementing *joint* needs assessments. Cooperation on goal setting between national organizations, government, donors, and international organizations could also be beneficial on improving shared / common goals. It was emphasized that *multi-stakeholder* needs assessment and *goal setting* processes could contribute to improved cooperation and coordination.

Improve Strategic Planning

Recommendations for improved strategic planning came on several levels. These include:

- Improved strategic planning for peacebuilding by all key sectors involved (Government, NGOs, International Organisations and Donors);
- Integration of Peacebuilding and Armed Violence Prevention and Reduction Programmes *into* local and national government strategies and policy frameworks;
- Support for *Multi-Stakeholder Planning Processes* by region and nationally
- Participatory development of a *Peace Profile and Cumulative Impact and Needs Assessment* in Iraq

Improved Strategic Planning by Sectors
There is an absence or lack of strategic *peacebuilding* planning across almost all sectors (as evaluated above). Interviewees recognized the strong need to improve strategic planning capabilities and to develop strategic plans for peacebuilding by the national and regional governments, local authorities, donors, and national and international organisations. This should include:
- Strengthening *capabilities* for strategic planning for peacebuilding;
- *Facilitating* and supporting strategic planning processes;
- Supporting *implementation* of strategic plans

Integration of Peacebuilding and Armed Violence Prevention and Reduction in Strategy & Policy
International experience has shown that integration of peacebuilding and AVR programmes into government strategy and policy frameworks at the local and national levels can have significant impacts on improving state engagement for peacebuilding. This is achieved through improving clear targets and objectives for relevant government agencies; providing

mandate; providing a policy framework for implementation. In addition to *integration* of peacebuilding and AVR it is necessary to support *capacity building* with state institutions and civil service and *cooperation* with non-state actors for effective implementation.

Support for Multi-Stakeholder Planning Processes by Region and Nationally
Beyond the sectoral level and integration of peacebuilding into government policies and frameworks key gains can be made in improving peacebuilding impact and effectiveness and cooperation amongst different stakeholders and sectors through the development of *multi-stakeholder planning processes*. These should be carried out both locally / regionally, and at the national level. The benefit of *MSPPs* is that they bring together the *range* of key actors and agencies involved in peacebuilding. This improves joint planning and strategic effectiveness.

Participatory Development of a Peace Profile and Cumulative Impact and Needs Assessment in Iraq
Peace Profiles and CINAs are still relatively unknown and poorly understood in the field. A Peace Profile can be carried out at many different levels (locally, regionally, nationally) and for individual sectors or cross-sectoral. Essentially, it is a *mapping of peacebuilding programmes and initiatives* and assessing their strengths, gaps, and what should be done. Key components of a Peace Profile normally include:

1. **Mapping all the peacebuilding programmes, activities and initiatives which are taking place**. This can include across all tracks (from high level leadership and formal negotiations to community-based programmes), and across all sectors (including: negotiations, work with media, economic peacebuilding programmes, work with youth, DDR, etc. The purpose of *mapping* and *identification* of these initiatives is to make visible *what* is being done. Normally most stakeholders are aware of what they are doing and a few other actors but not what is being done more broadly.

2. **Who is doing them and who are they reaching?** After assessing *what* is being done the next key step is to see (i) who is involved in implementing the programmes and (ii) who is involved as stakeholders, participants or beneficiaries.

3. **Impact** assesses what impact these different programmes are having. Is there a clear, visible change being achieved.

4. **Links & Synergy** looks at what links and connections exist between them, if any. Are the different initiatives linking or complementing or are they being carried out in silos.

5. **Gaps** is an assessment the gaps in peacebuilding initiatives —what isn't being addressed? Where are connections not being made? Which actors or necessary programmes or efforts are not being included or carried out?

6. **Blockers and Challenges** looks at what may be blocking peacebuilding work in Iraq or what challenges are those working in peacebuilding facing

7. **Recommendations & Proposals** focuses on what can be done to (i) address gaps, blockers and challenges; (ii) build upon potential links and synergies; and (iii) improve the quality, impact and effectiveness of peacebuilding in Iraq.

8. **Implementation Steps & Targets** then looks at how to implement these improvements in practice.

Peace profiles are an extremely valuable, practical and relevant tool to map out what's being done in peacebuilding and to engage stakeholders *together* to see what can be done to improve it. It can draw and build upon *cumulative impact and needs assessments* which are intended to identify the *impact* of different interventions, not individually or singularly, but altogether, and to see what needs remain and what can be done to improve peacebuilding.

Sectoral Recommendations

A number of sectoral recommendations were made during interviews. These include:

- Strengthen government engagement and capacity for peacebuilding

- Recognize the importance of working with religious leaders and supporting inter-faith work but also working to strengthen ties between religious leaders and other peacebuilding initiatives

- Engage with media as a key potential actor with the ability to reach large numbers of people, including improved media training on peace journalism and supporting journalists across Iraq working to link together and improve (i) multi-partial analysis and understanding of the conflict and (ii) making visible what can be done

- Encourage Embassies and Diplomats to have a more open engagement with Iraqi civil society organisations and not only state actors and political parties. This includes greater engagement by embassies and diplomats in support of peacebuilding initiatives

- Place particular emphasis on strengthening peace education in schools in Iraq as vital for long-term peacebuilding and national reconciliation

- Place particular emphasis on ensuring effective DDR processes are implemented and support continuing reintegration and development of livelihood alternatives for former militias and combatants

Support Nonviolence Movements and Armed Violence Reduction Strategies

Several Iraqi organisations have sought to promote nonviolence as an effective and critical tool for addressing conflicts in Iraq. Work in this area, as noted above, includes training, awareness raising, and work to engage conflict parties and actors using violence to find non-violent / non-armed alternatives. The dedication of these groups is high, however their work could be substantially improved through assisting: improved training and preparation of trainers and practitioners; strengthening networking and cooperation amongst organisations across Iraq; improving availability of Arabic and Kurdish language materials. The Arab revolutions in Egypt and Tunisia have shown the tremendous efficacy of nonviolent strategies to remove authoritarian regimes. However, the most important results of these protests have been that people have understood that through nonviolent and peaceful means is possible to reach real changes and build a peaceful society. Nonviolence is not only a tool to solve conflicts, but also an effective way to build a depth culture of peace in the societies. In Iraq after decades of war, there is a dramatic and wide-spread belief in the efficacy of violence to solve daily conflicts between people. Nonviolence movements, groups and individuals have understood the vicious circle of violence and fear, and are working to transform the society at many levels: interventions at educational sector, advocacy actions to fight against corruption, awareness campaigns to promote a culture of peace, public actions to denounce the lack of Human Rights and initiatives to strengthen civil society. Supporting and *scaling up* this work should be a priority, together with programmes on armed violence prevention with local authorities, media, state ministries and political parties, and civil society organisations.

Improve Networking and Coordination

This is one of the strongest recommendations brought forward through *SfP*. This includes networking and cooperation:

- Sectorally
- Regionally
- Nationally

Doing networking and cooperation effectively takes time and effort. As suggested above, an assessment should be facilitated to draw lessons learned from networking and coordination efforts in Iraq, and to identify strengths, challenges, and what is necessary for it to be done effectively. Supporting effective networking takes sustained engagement and commitment of necessary resources.

Improving coordination should also include support for **strategic planning retreats** and multi-stakeholder needs assessments and planning processes as identified above.

Collecting good / best practice examples of what has been done by NGOs in networking, and in peacebuilding more broadly in Iraq, can also help to improve good practice.

Capacity Building and Training

Building capacity is much more than just training, as most NGOs and donors in Iraq realize. It involves and requires also institutional support and support for operating and staff costs, support for programme and project implementation, and *targeted* and appropriate training and opportunities for professional development. Good capacity building programmes take place over time. While a tremendous amount has been done in Iraq all national and international experts recognized there is a need for much more. At the same time, a great deal of experience has been developed in Iraq which should be drawn upon for further capacity building. When it comes to peacebuilding, understanding of peace, nonviolence, conflict transformation, and reconciliation is still very low —both overall and in most organizations. Support for training and capacity building in these areas should be a key priority for donors and international organizations, but it should first include: a review and lesson learned from previous training efforts and a needs-assessment with Iraqi organizations and experts to see what capabilities need to be developed. Rather than one-off, or 'annual' training initiatives, a well structured, multi-phase programme should be supported to strengthen capabilities. This should also include ensuring good resources are available in Kurdish and Arabic.

Infrastructure for Peace (I4P)

Beyond training is the need to focus on building key *infrastructure for peace* at all levels in Iraq. This includes: development and strengthening of local peace committees and peace councils at the village and rural levels; creation of peace forums bringing together relevant stakeholders at the governorate and urban levels; establishment of a national peace forum; strengthening of government infrastructure and capabilities for peace from local authorities to the national level. Civil society organizations are also key elements of I4P in Iraq. Working to support and strengthen key peacebuilding and nonviolent capabilities and networking and coordination are essential to building effective standing capacity for peacebuilding and violence prevention in Iraq.

Donors & Support for Peacebuilding

Donors are key actors for further support for peacebuilding. Much funding over the past 8 years has been lost in corruption or poorly developed projects. Donors should be amongst the first to wish to see their funds being used to contribute to projects which can have meaningful impact. Donors should engage more proactively not only with their international partners but in particular with Iraqi stakeholders and civil society organizations to define donor objectives and priorities for peacebuilding. A review of donor programmes in Iraq in the field of peacebuilding should also be carried out. This can provide valuable lessons for future funding programmes in Iraq and for other countries. In particular, donors should develop *peacebuilding-specific* strategies and funding programmes, and coordinate their work together.

Key Global Recommendations

Much of what has happened in Iraq these last several years has to do with key peacebuilding gaps and challenges *globally*, not only in Iraq. Unaccountable use of military force to achieve ideological objectives and narrow interest of certain groups remains a key threat to peace and stability internationally. While 'professional' peacebuilding capabilities have developed significantly in the last 20 years, much more still has to be done to:

- Improve accountability of governments to their electorate and citizenry to remove the ability of 'leadership' and small cabals to drive countries to war;

- Strengthen understanding of peacebuilding and *effective* ways of dealing with conflicts amongst citizens, media and governments to ensure that not only is war a 'last' option, but that we have actually developed the other options before war so that they can work and address conflicts effectively;

- Shift focus from *intervention* based approaches to peacebuilding —whether by UN agencies or international organizations— to building long-term standing infrastructure and capabilities for peace from the local to national, regional levels and global levels, including support for peacebuilding capabilities within countries and for strengthening the peacebuilding capabilities of the UN and regional organizations;

The war in Iraq contributed to extraordinary death, destruction and chaos in Iraq beyond anything most Iraqis would have imagined before hand —even after years of sanctions and destructive wars. It increased instability and violent dynamics not only nationally but in the region and globally. The world is —potentially— at the threshold of a *turning point*. We are in a period where, on many levels, we have seen an increase in the use of force, military budgets, and armed interventionism. At the same time, there is an increasing *delegitimization* of war and violence taking place, not only in Iraq but globally. It is the responsibility of all governments, national and international organizations and concerned citizens to further this process, and to work to reduce or abolish aggressive militarism and war mongering in the same way earlier generations have worked to abolish slavery.

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The search for peace in Iraq continues, and while the trend and future scenarios are generally seen to be positive by many, much work remains. It is hoped that this report will have helped to make visible many of the complexities and challenges in Iraq, and to gather the reflections of Iraqi and international experts on conflict issues and current efforts to address them.

ANNEX

Introduction

Annex I details the list of people who have been interviewed by the research team during the *SfP in Iraq* project.

This list only includes those people who have explicitly confirmed their permission to be named.

The interviews have been conducted to a total of 100 people from different governorates, ideological background, religious communities, ethnic and linguistic origin, with a diligent effort made to maintain a gender-balanced viewpoint, in order to include the complexity of opinions, views and perspectives from the Iraqi society.

As you will observe, the *SfP* research team has conducted interviews to experts from Universities, key staff from UN agencies, representatives of political parties, journalists, artists, policy-makers, international and local representatives of NGOs, amongst others.

ANNEX 1 - List of people interviewed

1. Abbas Hassan Rahi, Director of Iraqi Organization for Rehabilitating society and Environment, Karbala

2. Abdul Amir Abd Daxan, Baghdad University, www.uobaghdad.edu.iq

3. Abdul-Aziz Al-Jarba, Peacebuilding grassroots organization, Mosul

4. Abdullah Khalid, director of Al-Mesalla office in Erbil, www.almesalla.net

5. Abdulkahaleq Abdullah, professor of Political Science at Emirates University www.uaeu.ac.ae, Dubai (United Arab Emirates)

6. Abdul Wahab al-Qassab, Former general in the Iraqi army and strategist expert, Baghdad

7. Adam Styp-Rekowski, Programme manager, Reconciliation and Civil Society Portfolio of United Nations for Office for Project Services (UNOPS) www.unops.org, Amman (Jordan)

8. Adil Sulaiman Mohammad, Former political prisoner, Mosul

9. Akram Mohamed Jamo, Islamic Political Party, Duhok

10. Ali Al-Rufaie, Dean of Faculty of Law of Baghdad University, www.uobaghdad.edu.iq

11. Ala Ali, Women in Technology, www.witmena.org, and member in Board of trustees in Iraqi Al-Amal Association, www.iraqi-alamal.org, Erbil

12. Ali Assaf, Consultant for United Nations, Iraqi government and NCCI, Baghdad

13. Ali Karem, Theater director and activist, Baghdad

14. Ali Kareem, Head of Kurdistan Institute for Human Rights (KIHR), Erbil

15. Dr. Amer al- Khayat, Economist and Head Arab organization of anti-corruption in Beirut, www.arabanticorruption.org, Baghdad

16. Dr. Amjed Al Dauly, Vice dean of Jehan University, Erbil

17. Ano J. Abdulmaseeh, Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP), www.kdp.se, Erbil

18. Aram Sheikh, Political party List of Change, Sulaymaniya

19. Dr. Asmat M. Khalid, President of University of Duhok, www.uod.ac

20. Asos Shafek, Swedish International Development Agency, www.sida.se

21. Atta M. Ahmad, Director of Civil development organization (CDO), www.cdo-iraq.org, Sulaymaniya

22. Avan Shawni, Former Human Rights officer at ministries councill, Kirkuk

23. Bakhtyar Abdullah, Olof Palme International Center, www.palmecenter.org, Sulaymaniya

24. Basher Kh. Al-Hadad, Head of Endowment & Religious affairs committee, Erbil Mosque

25. Basil Abdulkareem, Cofounder of Al-Mesalla organization, www.almesalla.net, Baghdad

26. Bushra Al-Ubaedy, professor of faculty of law in Baghdad University, www.uobaghdad.edu.iq

27. Bustan Association for Children's Education, www.bustan4children.org, Sulaymaniya

28. Dana Hassan, Director of Rehabilitation, Education and Community Health, (REACH), www.reachngo.org, Sulaymaniya

29. Dr. Dawood S. Atrushi, Vice president international relations of Duhok University, www.uod.ac

30. Directorate General for Development and Cooperation (EuropeAid) of European Commission, http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid, Brussels (Belgium)

31. Falah Al-Alusi, Rafidain Peace Organization, Baghdad

32. Falah Mustafa, United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), www.uniraq.org

33. Dr. Faleh H. M. Al-Khayat, Former General Director of the Iraqi Ministry of Oil; and Energy Consultant, http://www.oil.gov, Baghdad

34. Fawzi Abdulaheem Al-Saadawi, Political analyst, Baghdad

35. Ferihan Amso, Women in Technology, www.witmena.org, and Iraqi Al-Amal Association, www.iraqi-alamal.org, Erbil

36. Ghazi Faisal, Former Iraqi Ambassador in Paris, professor of political science in Tripoli University (Lybia), Baghad

37. Haider Abd Al Hussin Shehan, Informatics teacher, with professional experience working with international and local NGOs, Basra

38. Haifa Zangna, woman activists, Women Solidarity for Independent & Unified Iraq Organization. Baghdad, http://solidarityiraq.blogspot.com, Baghdad

39. Hanna Edward, Director of Al Amal Association, Baghdad, www.iraqi-alamal.org

40. Hikmat M. Karim, Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), Sulaymaniya

41. Dr Hussain Shaban, expert on International law, Baghdad

42. Hussam A. Ali, Azidi Solidarity and Fraternity Organization; Civic Alliance of minorities in Iraq; and Alliance project to support human rights in Iraq, Baghdad

43. Ibrahim Ismaeel, member of board of director of LAONF group www.laonf.net , Erbil

44. Ibrahim Kadhem Al Taiy, International Relief, www.ri.org, Baghdad

45. Ibrahim Kadhem S., Information Resource Center- IRC, Baghdad

46. Ido Babasheikh, Presidential advisor for Yazidi affairs, Yazidi community, Duhok

47. Imad Khadduri, Iraqi Nuclear Scientist, Author of the publication *Iraq's Nuclear Mirage memories and delusions* (Canada, 2003), Baghdad

48. Ismaeel Dawood, Un Ponte Per, www.unponteper.it, Pisa (Italy)

49. Jason Gluck, Senior Advisor of Rule of Law of United States Institute for Peace (USIP) www.usip.org, Washington (United States)

50. Joost Hiltermann, Deputy Program Director for Middle East and North Africa at International Crisis Group www.crisisgroup.org, Whasington (United States)

51. Laith Mustafa Ahmed, International Relief & Development (IRD), www.ird.org, Mosul

52. Liqaa al-Azzawi, former Dean of College of Art in University of Baghdad Al-Jazeera TV channel, www.aljazeera.com, Baghdad

53. Maha Al-hadethi, University of Al-Nahreen, Baghdad

54. Maria Jessop, Academy for International Conflict management and Peacebuilding; United States Institute for Peace (USIP), www.usip.org , Washington (United States)

55. Martina Pignatti, Un Ponte Per, www.unponteper.it, Pisa (Italy)

56. Mohammad Hassan Omer, Lawyer and Peace studies graduate, Duhok

57. Mundher Adhmi, Artist, consultant on education and member Cognitive Acceleration Associates, Baghdad

58. Mustafa Ali, Resurrecting Iraqi People Center (RIPC), www.ripciraq.org, Dhi Qar

59. NGO Coordination Committee for Iraq (NCCI), www.ncciraq.org, Baghdad

60. Nofa Khadduri, Women activists, Women Solidarity for Independent & Unified Iraq Organization. Baghdad, http://solidarityiraq.blogspot.com, Baghdad

61. Othman Doski, Head of Aikawa center for employment, Duhok

62. Panagiota Voidonikolas, former project officer at United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) www.unops.org, Amman (Jordan)

63. Raid Michael, Un Ponte Per, Erbil, www.unponteper.it, Erbil

64. Rawand Polis, Member of board of directors of Cultural center in Ankawa, Erbil

65. Razaw Mohammad, Lawyer and human rights activist, Sulaymaniya

66. Rebin Rasul, Editor of Hawlati newspaper, www.hawlati.co, Erbil

67. Dr. Saad N. Jawad, professor of political science in University of Baghdad, www.uobaghdad.edu.iq

68. Saba Al Nadawi, member of board of directors of Laonf group and Institute for War and Peace Reporting, Baghdad, http://iwpr.net/programme/iraq

69. Sabri Al Maqdacy, St Joseph Church, Erbil

70. Sajad Badir, Al-Marbad radio, Basra

71. Dr. Sajid Ahmeid Abl Al.Rekabi, College of Law and Political Science at Basrah University, www.uobasrah.edu.iq

72. Salah Y. Majid, Programme coordinator at Harikar NGO, http://www.harikar.org, Duhok

73. Salar Ahmed, coordinator of Laonf Group, www.laonf.net, Erbil

74. Sameer Abdulla, United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), www.uniraq.org, Kirkuk

75. Sameer Kirkuk, United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), www.uniraq.org

76. Samir Al Badrawi, Chairman of Iraqi Peace Organization, Baghdad

77. Sami Shatti, Dar Alsalam organization, Baghdad

78. Sardasht Abdulrahman, Democracy and Human Rights Development center (DHRD), www.dhrd.org, Sulaymaniya

79. Shatha Naji, Women peace organización, Baghdad

80. Shwan Mohammed, Chief editor of Awena newspaper, www.awene.com, Sulaymaniya

81. Stéphane Mondon, International consultant for democracy support, electoral processes, and rule of law; participated in the European Union Election Assessment Team in Iraq, Brussels (Belgium)

82. Suzan Aref, Director of Women Empowerment organization, www.weoiraq.org, Erbil

83. Thair Ismail, Programme officer at Olof Plame International Center, www.palmecenter.org, Sweden

84. Thomas Hill, professor New York University's Centre for Global Affairs, American University in Sulaymaniya; and worked for Columbia University Conflict Resolution Centre, www.cicr-columbia.org, New York (United States)

85. Tristan Troby, Country manager of Gothenburg Initiative, Erbil

86. Yassin Mohammed Al-Ithawy, Faculty of political Science of University of Baghdad, www.uobaghdad.edu.iq

87. Zaid Al-Wardi, Cofounder of Al-Mesalla organization, www.almesalla.net, Baghdad

88. Zeto Shamws Al Din, Human Rights officer at United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), www.uniraq.org, Erbil

89. Zuhair AlJezalry, Editor of Aswat Al Iraq news agency, http://en.aswataliraq.info, Erbil

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END NOTES

1. Many directly 'lit the match' themselves — from military actions to wide-spread arrests to the infamous '100 orders'.

2. This section summarizes key outputs from interviews and extensive literature review from the texts cited below in this section.

3. A S Hashim, *Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency in Iraq*, Hurst & Company, London, 2006, pp. 230 – 231. P W Galbraith, T*he End of Iraq. How American Incompetence Created a War Without End*, Simon and Shuster, London, 2006, p. 12. A A Allawi, *The Occupation of Iraq: Winning the War, Losing the Peace*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 2007, pp. 7 – 8.

4. N Rosen, Aftermath. *Following the Bloodshed of America's Wars in the Muslim World*, Nation Books, New York, 2010, p. 554.

5. Allawi, op. cit., p. 130.

6. Hashim, loc. cit.

7. P J Munson, *Iraq in Transition. The Legacy of Dictatorship and the prospects for Democracy*, Potomac Books Inc., Washington D.C., 2009, p. 2.

8. This assessment —upheld in many publications and also in several *SfP* interviews with both national and international experts who were present at the time— is also questioned by others. Sawsan Al-Assaf notes that several of these institutions have good experts on Iraq (especially CSIS which has published reports on Iraq both before and after the occupation). From this perspective, the assessment is that the US administration did not listen to experts who provided contrary evidence or recommendations (this is also supported elsewhere in this report and is a common assessment on US pre-war and occupation planning). Cf. Sawsan Al-Assaf, the third report to *SFP* in Iraq. Others, however, would still note the limited travel schedules and opportunities for meetings with different sectors which these analysts had, their lack of language knowledge, limited amount of time on the ground, and lack of exposure to different points of view.

9. Rosen, op. cit., pp. 16- 18.

10. Allawi, op. cit., pp. 7 – 8.

11. ibid., p. 130.

12. Hashim, op. cit, pp. 59- 60.

13. Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), Lessons Learned/ After Action Reports http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/oif-lessons-learned.htm; Hashim, op. cit., pp. 322 – 323.

14. Munson, op. cit., p. 113.

15. Galbraith, op. cit., p. 5.

16. ibid., p. 7.

17. http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/ideology

18. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ideology

19. Allawi, op. cit., p. 4.

20. ibid.

21. President Bush, State of the Union Address, January 2002, http://stateoftheunionaddress.org/2002-george-w-bush

22. Allawi, op. cit., p. 10.

23. Hashim, op. cit., p. 276.

24. Allawi, op. cit., p. 185. The US Government and its allies had been told by several Iraqi exiled groups that this was the welcome they would receive. Even minimal knowledge / awareness of these groups own objectives, the US' previous history with Iraq from the first Gulf War and the sanctions-period, or minimal knowledge of the history of warfare, should have led US planners to have been sceptical of these claims.

25. Hashim, op. cit., pp. 14 – 15.

26. ibid., pp. 276- 277.

27. For excellent analysis of this and its relation to the US invasion and occupation of Iraq cf. Allawi, op. cit., p. 5.

28. Munson, loc. cit.

29. Hashim, op. cit., p. 139.

30. For this reason a differentiation was developed inside Iraq between the 'resistance' and 'terrorist' groups. The resistance concentrated on resisting the occupation. Most of its activities were outside Iraqi cities. They declared themselves as resistance to the occupation. Terrorist groups were active inside cities and killed civilians while also claiming that they were fighting against the occupying forces. In an interviewed with the one of the Iraqi national resistance in A-Mosul, made by the Germany writer Jurgen Todenhofer who wrote the book of Why do you kill; untold story of the Iraqi resistance, the man called Mohammed heads a united resistance group. Mohammed informed the writer that; "The national Iraqi resistance is not fighting to establish an Islamic theocratic state-unlike both Al-Qaeda, which is financed by Saudi" charitable organizations" and the radical Shiite militias, which are mostly funded by Iran. The resistance wants to install a secular constitution. It wants to create a democratic state, in which all Iraqis feel represented, a state that is nationalist in orientation. It will have its spiritual and intellectual roots in Islam. The resistance say's that the terrorists are people who kill civilians for political reasons. They consider Al-Qaeda, the death squads run by certain politicians and the US government all to be terrorists. The soldiers of the US government have demonstrably killed hundreds of thousands of civilians in Iraq, more than Al-Qaeda and all the militias together". Todenhofer, Jurgen, *Why do you kill; the untold story of the Iraqi resistance, the disinformation company,* 2009, p.86. Opinion of Iraqi Resercher Sawsan Al-Assaf, Third Report to *SfP* Iraq

31. Hashim, op. cit., pp. 230 – 231.

32. Allawi, op. cit., pp. 398 – 399.

33. Hashim, op. cit., pp. 78, 80 – 81.

34. S Al-Assaf, *Searching for Peace in Iraq*, The fourth report, p. 4.

35. Rosen, op. cit., pp. 16 – 18. Allawi, op. cit., p. 7.

36. Galbraith, op. cit., p. 112.

37. Hashim, op. cit., pp. 280 - 281.

38. Allawi, loc. cit.

39. ibid., p. 97.

40. While a number of highly qualified individuals with extensive experience in their fields did come in with the initial ORHA team or shortly after it was established, most of them did not remain in their positions long and were not included in the transfer of authority to the CPA. Assessed broadly and across the levels of the occupation authority, the general tendency was for staff dramatically under-qualified and under-experienced, without background, preparation or required competency for the roles and positions they'd be given.

41. Allawi, op. cit., p. 179.

42. ibid., p. 250.

43. ibid., p. 97.

44. The State Department has more extensive experience working in post-war transition and in addressing issues of governance and administration. Placing post-war planning within the Pentagon and under officials with little or no previous experience in addressing the complex issues involved in transition and post-war stabilisation created critical challenges in the immediate weeks, months and years following the invasion. It was not until the end of the CPA and transfer of key responsibilities to the State Department and US Embassy in Iraq that a higher level of capability and expertise would be applied to these issues. By then, major damage had already been done.

45. Galbraith, op. cit., pp. 95 – 96.

46. Allawi, op. cit., p. 83.

47. Galbraith, op. cit., p. 9. Retiring US Army Commander General Erin Shineski advised in Congressional hearings prior to the war that Iraq would need a force of 500.000 troops or more to effectively pacify and stabilize the country after the invasion. His views were dismissed by Wolfowitz, Rumsfeld, Feith and other key war planners.

48. Munson, op. cit., p. 62.

49. ibid.

50. Munson, op. cit., p. 62. R M Gordon and E B Trainor, *Cobra II —The Inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq*, Vintage Books, New York, 2006, pp. 459, 462. R Sanchez, *Wiser in Battle— A soldier's Story*, Harper Collins Publishers, New York, 2008, p. 168.

51. Galbraith, op. cit., p. 9.

52. Hashim, op. cit., p. 286.

53. ibid., pp. 14 – 15.

54. ibid.

55. ibid., pp. 29 – 30.

56. For experiences on how to engage populations in national dialogue processes to address key challenges in development and post-war recovery see http://www.democraticdialoguenetwork.org/. While the context in Iraq was definitely unique, a focus on inclusion of the national population and hand-over to a nationally-owned / driven process of transition could have addressed some of the challenges brought about by the early over-reliance on US administration.

57. Galbraith, op. cit., p. 118.

58. R S Jennings, *The Road Ahead: Lessons in Nation-Building from Japan, Germany and Afghanistan for Postwar Iraq*, Peaceworks 49, Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2003.

59. For excellent discussion of the relevance of 'transition' to Iraq see Munson, op. cit.

60. These 'Lessons Identified' have been compiled by the Department of Peace Operations (DPO) in consultation with key experts and organisations / agencies working in the field. They have been reviewed and assessed in the Peacebuilding, Conflict Transformation and Post-War Recovery training programmes with practitioners and experts from more than 60 countries. They broadly reflect key lessons identified by UN experts and local, national and international reviews and experiences (see, for example, the OECD-DAC 'International Dialogue on Peace-building and Statebuilding' http://www.oecd.org/site/0,3407,en_21571361_43407692_1_1_1_1_1,00.html). They also reflect key items identified in interviews in Iraq as what should have been priorities or issues which were not adequately addressed.

61. For a review of literature on best practices and lessons learned in security sector reform please see http://www.stimson.org/books-reports/ssr-bibliography-and-reference-spreadsheet/; also cf the 'Beginners Guide to Security Sector Reform' at http://www.ssrnetwork.net/documents/GFN-SSR_A_Beginners_Guide_to_SSR_v2.pdf

62. Cf. For example, International Idea, 'Reconciliation After Violent Conflict' at http://www.idea.int/publications/reconciliation/

63. Diamond, op. cit., p.16.

64. Allawi, op. cit., p. 195

65. ibid., p.94

66. L Diamond, 'Building Democracy After Conflict. Lessons from Iraq', *Journal of Democracy*, vol.16, no.1, Jan. 2005, p.10

67. Munson, op. cit., pp.61- 62.

68. Quoted in Andrew Bacevich, "What Is An Iraqi Life Worth?", *The Washington Post*, July 9, 2006

69. Hashim, op. cit., p. xv-xvi.

70. Allawi, loc. cit.

71. Galbraith, op. cit., p.110.

72. ibid., p. 8.

73. Packer, *The Assassins' Gate*, p. 139 quoted in Munson, op. cit., p. 60.

74. Allawi, loc. cit.

75. Galbraith, op. cit., p. 103- 104.

76. ibid.

77. Coalition Provisional Authority Order Number 1, "De-Ba'athification of Iraqi Society", 16 May 2003, http://www.iraqcoalition.org/regulations/20030516_CPAORD_1_De-Ba_athification_of_Iraqi_Society.pdf

78. Rosen, op. cit., p. 31.

79. Munson, op. cit., p. 224.

80. Rosen, loc. cit.

81. Munson, op. cit., p. 118.

82. Sawsan Al-Assaf, the second report to *SFP* in Iraq, p.9

83. Allawi, op. cit., p. 152.

84. See Allawi, op. cit., p. 152 for presentation of three options discussed at the time. Others could also have been found. Those involved in taking the decision had limited previous experience in dealing with how to address these issues in post-war / transition contexts. Notably, the number of Iraqis involved in the discussion was

limited, and made up predominantly of the Iraqi exile community which had returned to Iraq with the fall of Saddam Hussein.

85. Munson, op. cit., p.119.

86. Coalition Provisional Authority Order Number 2, "Dissolution of Entities", 23 May 2003, http://www.cpa-iraq.org/regulations/20030823_CPAORD_2_Dissolution_of_Entities_with_Annex_A.pdf. The entities referred to the Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Information, Ministry of State for Military Affairs, Iraqi Intelligence Service, National Security Bureau, Directorate of National Security, and Special Security Organization. The order include other entities such as Murafaqin (Bodyguards), -Himaya al Khasa (Special Guard). The military organizations dissolved include; the Army, Air Force, Navy, the Air Defense Force, and other regular military services like the Republican Guard, the Special Republican Guard, the Directorate of Military Intelligence, the Al Quds Force, and the emergency Forces (Quwat al Tawari). The paramilitaries included: Saddam Fedayeen, Ba`ath Party Militia, Friends of Saddam-Saddam's Lion Cubs (Ashbal Saddam). The order involved other organizations: The Presidential Diwan, the Presidential Secretariat, the National Assembly, the Youth Organization (al-Futuwah), National Olympic Committee, Special and National Security Courts

87. K Fahim, Playing With Soldiers: Is the Cost Rising on CPA Bungling? *The Village Voice*, July 2-8, 2003, http://www.villagevoice.com/news/0327,fahim,45232,1.html (accessed October 31, 2005). Iraqi general and Major General Marks quoted in Schuster, Iraq Insurgency 101 and Munson, op. cit., p.119.

88. P Cockburn, Muqtada al-Sadr and the Fall of Iraq, Faber and Faber, London, 2008, p. 226.

89. Munson, op. cit., pp. 63 - 64. "According to LTG Ricardo Sanchez, GEN John Abizaid, CENTCOM commander, also received "extraordinarily positive" feedback from Iraqi generals he sat down with in Baghdad to discuss the possibility of reforming units." Munson, op. cit., p. 64 . Gordon and Trainor, op. cit., pp. 480-483. Garner quoted in J Fallows, Why Iraq Has No Army, The Atlantic Monthly, 296, no. 5, December 2005, p. 65. Sanchez, op. cit., p. 176.

90. Allawi, op. cit., p. 158.

91. Hashim, op. cit., p. 95.

92. ibid., pp. 280 –281.

93. ibid., p. 79.

94. cf. Corruption Perception Index Rankings http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corruption_Perceptions_Index#Rankings and http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2010/results

95. Hashim, op. cit, pp. 18 –19.

96. Rosen, op. cit., p. 554. A key example of this was the process by which the CPA produced the TAL. "Written in secret mostly by Americans; fewer than a hundred Iraqis saw document before Bremer chose to promulgate it. There was no opportunity for public comment or input, an omission unheard of in modern constitution writing, and that angered many Iraqis." Galbraith, op. cit., p. 140.

97. Galbraith, op. cit., pp. 122 – 23.

98. Hashim, op. cit., p. 17.

99. ibid., pp. 282, 294 – 295.

100. Munson, op. cit., p. 73.

101. Allawi, op. cit., p. 259.

102. Cockburn, op. cit., pp. 241 – 242.

103. Iraqi Living Conditions Survey http://www.fafo.no/ais/middeast/iraq/imira/Tabulation%20reports/english%20atlas.pdf

104. Rosen, op. cit., pp. 19 – 20.

105. ibid., p. 21.

106. Iraq Partners Forum Presents, *The Iraq Briefing Book*, December 2010, p. 9

107. Galbraith, op. cit., p. 129.

108. Allawi., op. cit., p. 253.

109. Munson, op. cit., p. 32.

110. Galbraith, op. cit., p. 132.

111. Dan Murphy, "Sadr's Militia Tightens Grip on Healthcare," *Christian Science Monitor*, May 25, 2006. Edward Wong, "U.S. Troops Start Major Attacks on Shiite Insurgents in 2 Cities," *New York Times*, May 6, 2004. "Quwal Khula Baghdad Taghtasib Sayyida 'Araqiya" [Forces of the Baghdad Plan Rape Iraqi Woman] Azzaman, February 20, 2007, http://www.azzaman.com/index. asp?fname=2007%5CO2%5CO2-20%5C999.htm&storytitle (accessed June 2, 2008). Bremer, My Year in Iraq, 186. Quoted in Munson, op cit. P 207

112. Perito, "Policing Iraq." Cited in Munson, ibid, p. 67

113. S Al-Assaf, *Searching for Peace in Iraq*, The fourth report, p. 5. See also referenced sources: http://thereport.amnesty.org/en/regions/middle-east-north-africa/iraq; and http://www.buzzle.com/articles/amnesty-internatio-nal-report-2009-on-iraq.html

114. Munson, op. cit., p. 126.

115. ibid., p. 124.

116. Allawi., op. cit., p. 252.

117. Allawi., ibid., p. 268

118. Hashim, op cit, p. 2

119. For development of the concept of fault lines in conflict analysis see the work of Johan Galtung in cite TRANSCEND UN Manual and Searching for Peace

120. Munson, op. cit., p. 105.

121. NCCI, *Iraq's Civil Society in Perspective*, April 2011, p. 28.

122. Cf Munson, op. cit., pp. 203,207. Rosen, op. cit., pp. 31, 338-339, 552. P Cockburn, Muqtada al-Sadr and the Fall of Iraq, Faber and Faber, London, 2008, pp. 214, 215. Galbraith, op. cit., 2006, pp. 173 – 174.

123.- D Garrasi, Iraq Community-Based Conflict Assessments: A Synthesis, June 2009, p. 3, http://www.iauiraq.org/reports/Community_CA_DG_20%20June.pdf

124. It is important to note that this violence was not necessarily sectarian based or driven. The Ba'athist regime practised a ruthless brutality against any / all sectors which opposed it, while also showing, at times, a willingness to use cooptation and inclusion to address opposition. While the largest organized campaigns of violence were directed against Kurds and Shia following uprisings by these communities, Sunnis and other communities were also targeted. The violence of the Ba'athist regime left a lasting impact, however, on a common sense of Iraqi identity and relations between communities. This was significantly increased and worsened by post-2003 policies which failed to adequately enable a process of transition and national reconciliation and instead escalated and intensified directly sectarian politics and violence.

125. Hashim, op. cit., pp. 66 – 67.

126. Munson, op. cit., p. 27. Allawi, op. cit., p. 143. Cockburn, op.cit., p. 90.

127. Hashim, loc. cit.

128. ibid. While many Iraqis point with disgust at the brutalities at Abu Ghraib and in Ministries in Iraq post-2003, many Iraqis also remember wide-spread human rights violations and brutalities practiced by the former regime against its opponents. A problem today identified by several interviewees is the different sectarian uses of these atrocities, rather than uniting across communities to call for an end to human rights abuses and torture against any and all civilians.

129. ibid., pp. 218 – 219.

130. Munson, op. cit., p. 29.

131. Saad Jawad & Sawsan Al-Assaf, *Iraqi Women between Occupation Democratic and American humanitarian intervention Policy*, 2011

132. ibid., p. 25.

133. S Al-Assaf, The Implications of America's withdrawal Strategy from Iraq, *bitterlemons-international Journal*, July 09, 2009, Edition 26 Volume 7.

134. Rosen, op. cit., pp. 16 – 18.

135. S Al-Assaf, The Effect of the Religious and Sectarian Struggle on Iraqi Society, paper for al-Jazeera Studies Centre Conference, Doha-Qatar, 25-26 Feb.2007

136. United Nations, "The Political Transition in Iraq: Report of the Fact-Finding Mission," Security Council Document S/2004/140 (February 23, 2004): 3, http://www.un.org/News/dh/iraq/rpt-fact-finding-mission.pdf (accessed June 2, 2008). U.S. Department of State, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, 2005: Iraq March 8, 2006, http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/ hrrpt/2005/61689.htm. Cited in Munson, op. cit., p. 203.

137. Galbraith, op. cit., p. 183.

138. Rosen, op. cit., pp. 338 – 339.

139. Hashim, op. cit., p. 56.

140. NCCI, op. cit., p. 26.

141. Government of Iraq, United Nations Country Team, Common Country Assessment Iraq 2009, UNCT, June 2010.

142. Garrasi, op.cit., p. 3.

143. Munson, op. cit., p. 224.

144. NCCI, op. cit., p. 23.

145. U.S. Government Accountability Office, Key Issues for Congressional Oversight, Report to Congressional Committees (March 2009).

146. Iraq Partners Forum Presents, op. cit., p. 10.

147. ibid., p. 15.

148. Garrasi, op.cit., p. 6.

149. ibid., p. 3.

150. Fadhil al-Rubi'aie quoted in M'ad Feadh, „Hal Ya'oudal-Ba'ath?" [Will the Ba'ath Return?] Asharq Alawsat, February 9, 2007, http://www.ashar qalawsat.com/print/default.asp?did=405511 (accessed March 17, 2007, link inactive). Cited in Munson, op. cit., p. 179.

151. ibid., p. 167.

152. Garrasi, op.cit., p. 5.

153. "A major obstacle to politics of unity was the lack of known and acceptable national leaders. Iraq had only a handful of widely recognized leaders, most of whom were viewed with skepticism. When asked to name the leader that they trusted most, the top response, Ibrahim Jafari, was named by only 12 percent of respondents. The next closest leaders came in at 3 to 4 percent and an overwhelming 64 percent of Iraqis polled declined to name a trusted leader. Focus-group interviewers found that participants in the summer of 2003 "generally [had] more negative than positive things to say in reaction to a list of emerging political and religious leaders in Iraq." The researchers noted a particular distaste for exiled leaders and attributed this aversion to "vilification campaigns led by the previous regime," yet judging from many other Iraqi statements, exiled leaders were distrusted because they were often seen as traitors to the Iraqis that continued to suffer under Saddam's rule." Munson, op. cit., p. 179.

154. Munson, op. cit., p. 3.

155. Hashim, op. cit., pp. 21 – 22.

156. Allawi, op. cit., p. 91.

157. Munson, op. cit., p. 106.

158. "Little has changed since 1910 when an Ottoman official wrote, "To depend on the tribe is a thousand times safer than depending on the government, for whereas the latter defers or neglects repression, the tribe, no matter how feeble it may be, as soon as it learns that an injustice has been committed against one of its members readies itself to exact vengeance on his behalf." Isma'il Haqqi Bey Baban Zadeh quoted in Hanna Batatu, The Old Social Classes and the Revolutionary Movements of Iraq: A Study of Iraq's Old Landed and Commercial Classes and ql'Its Communists, Ba'athists, and Free Officers (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978), 21. Quoted in Munson, op. cit., p.111.

159. Amir Taheri, "Saddam Husayn Tries To Revive the Tribal System Following the Collapse of the Party Control System," Al-Sharq al-Awsat, trans. FBIS (London: May 15, 1996). Davis, Memories of State, 239. Jabar, "Sheikhs and Ideologues," 95. Quoted in Munson, op. cit., pp. 44-45.

160. Garrasi, op.cit., p. 6.

161. Allawi, op. cit., p. 245.

162. Rosen, op. cit., pp. 232-234.

163. 'Briefcase NGOs' is a term found in many countries to refer to organisations which are often no more than a man or woman with a 'briefcase' and presenting themselves as an organisation. Significant amounts of funding in Iraq after the invasion and through to 2010 were given to organisations which often had questionable organisational structures and capacities and many programmes funded in this way were not actually implemented. This was also affected by the fact that many donors did not enter into Iraq. A significant number of interviewees cited cases where funding relationships / partnerships were developed on the basis of e-mail communications or meetings in Amman or other neighbouring countries. There has been little to no oversight of many projects in Iraq and an absence of rigorous monitoring and evaluation. Two major causes for this frequently cited was the lack of strong capacity on the part of Iraqi NGOs and the security context in Iraq. These became overused excuses / justifications. On the part of most organisations there was little to no effort to monitor and evaluate and —given the range of expertise / quality of many of the international organisations involved— there was often little interest or knowledge how to do monitoring and evaluation effectively in highly complex and volatile conflict settings.

164. Interviewees spoke of a negative environment / context for unions including legislative restrictions and direct targeting by state and militia forces of unions and workers who were seen as too critical of government policies. These allegations and concerns should be more closely investigated and monitored.

165. Iraq Common Country Analysis CCA Framework, p. 17.

166. UNICEF/COSIT/KRSO/Government of Iraq Ministry of Health, Iraq Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), 2006, cited in UNICEF, COSIT, KRSO, Ministry of Health, Iraq: Monitoring the Situation of Children and Women – Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2006, Final Report: Volume 1 (2007).

167. Garrasi, op. cit., p. 4.

168. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freedom_in_the_World#Country_rankings

169. For further detailing and confirmation of the human rights situation in Iraq see also Human Rights Watch World Report 2011 Iraq available at http://www.hrw.org/en/world-report-2011/iraq and Amnesty International Annual Report 2011: Iraq at http://www.amnesty.org/en/region/iraq/report-2011

170. "In November the Ministry of Health completed a statistical study on the prevalence of FGM and the data suggests that 41 percent of Kurdish girls and women have undergone this procedure. On July 6, 2010, the High Committee for Issuing Fatwas at the Kurdistan Islamic Scholars Union - the highest Muslim authority in Iraqi Kurdistan to issue religious pronouncements and rulings - issued a religious edict that said Islam does not prescribe the practice, but stopped short of calling for an outright ban. At this writing the women's rights committee of the Kurdistan parliament had finalized a draft law on family violence, including provisions on FGM, and the Ministry of Health announced plans to disseminate information on the practice's negative health consequences. But the government has not yet banned FGM or created a comprehensive plan to eradicate it." Human Rights Watch World Report 2011 Iraq available at http://www.hrw.org/en/world-report-2011/iraq

171. This was also observed by Nir Rosen following extensive travels and interviews in Iraq. Cf. Rosen, op. cit., p. 548.

172. Previous initiatives, such as the creation of the 'Implementation and Follow-up Committee for National Reconciliation' were highly criticized for the manner in which they were formed and how they functioned. Rather than being seen as authentic and inclusive efforts to contribute to national reconciliation they were perceived as highly sectarian political measures. For further discussion see also Rosen, ibid., pp. 240 -241

173. Rosen, ibid, pp. 538-539.

174. Though several interviewees saw this more as a response to electoral calculation than authentic commitment to ending sectarianism and developing inclusive, issue-based politics.

175. Rosen, op. cit., p. 549.

176. 581 candidates had been prevented from running by the end of April 2010. 8 candidates were elected and were then subsequently barred as Ba'athists. Al-Assaf, Building a state on a sectarian, ethnic and quota basis, bitterlemons-international Journal, Edition 8 Volume 8 - March 25, 2010.

177. Al-Assaf, Building a State on a Sectarian, op.cit.

178. The elections results on the independent high electoral commission, http://www.ihec.iq/Arabic/result.aspx

179. It is worth mentioning that there is a general idea in Iraq that says the Sunnis have boycotted the 2005 elections. While there was significantly reduced Sunni participation and several Sunni parties and factions which called for a boycott, some of the Sunni political parties, (like the Islamic party, National Dialogue Front and National Dialogue Council) actually participated in the elections under one coalition called National Dialogue Front, (Jabhat al-Wifaq al-Watani; the number of their list was 618). They decided to participate in the 2005 elections for protecting the rights of Sunni sect in Iraq as they declared in TV, media and their speeches. They received 44 seats in the parliament with 6-7 ministers (not very active) in the government. In addition, the vice-president was the head of the Islamic party Mr. Tarik-Al Hashimi. However, the Sunni religious institution, Association of Muslim Scholars (Haya'at Ulama al-Muslimeen) headed by Sheikh Harith al-Dhari, boycotted the whole political process from 2003 until now. It insisted that the political process under the occupation was not more than following the orders of the occupiers who were thinking only of their own advantages. As well as this religious institution requested the speeding of the withdrawal process of Americans troops, and only after that the establishment of national Iraqi government. (It should be noted that this varied somewhat from the position of many important Shi'ite parties and religious leaders, including Al-Sistani, which called for immediate elections and the formation of a responsible national government that could take over. Both, however, included the aim of rapid / immediate withdrawal of occupation forces). According to the Association of Muslim Scholars: "We are not saying that they should leave Iraq immediately," explained Mothanna Harith Al-Dhari, spokesperson of the Association. He also said that "We are asking them to set a timetable to withdraw in stages, but we need, at least, to see some progress in this front. This is a very "legitimate right" the association also believed that the occupation will only be ended by the Iraqi national resistance. Sunni people who participated in the 2005 elections realized that the representatives they had chosen were very weak and couldn't protect their rights. Some Sunni members in the parliaments were threatened, intimidated, or kidnapped because of their attitude in the parliament or their speeches in the TV and media. On top of that the de-Baathification law was, and still is, a tool to be used against any opposing member. According to that the Sunni people felt that even if they have representatives in the political process they don't have any capability or real influence in it. For further discussion see Al-Assaf, The Effect of the Religious and Sectarian Struggle on Iraqi Society, op. cit.

180. Interviewees amongst the Sunni community in particular noted that 'Sunnis people have realized that if the government —Al-Maliki- managed to get another mandate for another 4years with the same political parties and coalitions, primarily dominated by Shia and Kurdish interests, this will mean that their marginalization will

continue. Consequently, the Sunnis went to the elections and supported a Shia leader, Allawi, to protect themsel-ves and their community from the encroachment of a sectarian government or further sectarian policies.'

181. http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8133423.stm

182. Katzman, "The Kurds in Post-Saddam Iraq," 2

183. Rubin, "Iranian Strategy in Iraq," 6

184. Bensahel, Vote on Iraq Constitution Pending [interview by Washington Post]

185. Al-Assaf Sawsan; the Effect of the Religious and Sectarian Struggle on Iraqi Society,;op.cit

186. Baker, James & Hamilton, Lee, *the Iraq Study Group Report,* division of Random House, Inc., New York, 2006, p.39

187. Burnham et al., op.cit

188. UN WFP and Central Organization for Statistics and Information Technology (COSIT), Food Security and Vul-nerability Analysis in Iraq, WFP, (11 May, 2006). For an extensive collection of documentation on the humanitarian situation as of late October, 2006, see NCCI, Iraq Humanitarian Crisis: Documents of Reference, (28 October, 2006)

189. For analysis and discussion of these policies and the factors behind them see above.

190. The same has also been said in other conflicts. In the case of Vietnam, Lieutenant Colonel John Paul Vann, Advisor For Military Assistance Command Vietnam, noted: "Security may be 10 percent of the problem, or it may be 90 percent, but whichever it is, it's the first 10 percent or the first 90 percent. Without security, nothing else we do will last." John Paul Vann quoted in Neil Sheehan, *A Bright and Shining Lie: John Paul Vann and America in Vietnam* (New York: Random House, 1988), 67. Also cited in Munson, op. cit., p.53. The key question, of course, is how to achieve that security, and recognition of the need to address the underlying causes of conflict which give rise to insecurity.

191. UN, In larger freedom: Towards Security, Development and Human Rights for All, Report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for decision by Heads of State and Government in September 2005, http://www.un.org/largerfreedom/

192. U.S. Department of State, Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, 2005: Iraq, March 8, 2006, http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61689.htm (accessed May 19, 2008). Larry Diamond, Squandered Victory: The American Occupation and the Bungled Effort to Bring Democracy to Iraq (New York: Times Books, 2005), 125. Cited in Munson, op. cit., p. 27.

193. "Issues facing children in Iraq", UNICEF – IRAQ http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/iraq_2122.html Updated: 6 April 2010.

194. See for example: Neurology of Iraq refugees studied BALTIMORE, April 12 2011 (UPI) http://www.upi.com/Science_News/2011/04/12/Neurology-of-Iraq-refugees-studied/UPI-80391302658728/#ixzz1JOeRgfcf

195. Burnham et al., op.cit., cited in Ali Dhahir Ali, *Searching for Peace in Iraq* (Draft), Erbil-Iraq, May 2010, p. 30.

196. UNAMI SSI Sept. 2009. UNAMI reports are valuable sources of information on security incidents in the country. The 'Iraq Today' Blog Spot provides regular up-dates on reported security incidents. http://warnewsto-day.blogspot.com/. The Iraq Coalition Casualty Count http://icasualties.org/Iraq/Fatalities.aspx provides a record of military casualties but does not cover all security incidents. Iraq Business News provides weekly up-dates on security incidents (http://www.iraq-businessnews.com).

197. Brookings Institute, Iraq Index. Tracking Variables of Reconstruction & Security in Post-Saddam Iraq, June 30, 2011, p. 14, http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/Files/Centers/Saban/Iraq%20Index/index.pdf

198. Kate Kelland, "Civilian death study rates "dirty war" in Iraq", Reuters, February 16th 2011, http://www.reu-ters.com/article/2011/02/16/us-civilian-death-idUSTRE71F3KL20110216 (Accessed 16.02.2011).

199. See http://www.iraq-businessnews.com/2011/06/15/weekly-security-update-for-15th-june-2011/. AKE has worked in Iraq since 2003. For more information on their work in Iraq and globally see: http://www.akegroup.com/

200. ABC/BBC/NHK, Iraq: Where Things Stand (2009); Iraq Partners Forum Presents, op. cit., p. 10.

201. Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) and Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Iraq: Political wrangling leaves around 2.8 million displaced Iraqis with no durable solutions in sight, 14 December 2010, pp. 5-6, http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/(httpInfoFiles)/3D35B6E12A391265C12577F90045B37E/$file/Iraq_Overview_Dec2010.pdf

202. Hashim, op. cit., pp. 329-330.

203. Rosen, op. cit., p. 316.

204. Munson, op. cit., pp. 8-9.

205. Cf. Anna Mulrine, "In Iraq, can State Department pick up where US military leaves off?", *The Christian Science Monitor*, December 8, 2010, http://www.csmonitor.com/USA/Military/2010/1208/In-Iraq-can-State-Department-pick-up-where-US-military-leaves-off

206. As of 2008. Most interviewees maintained this figures are still relevant.Page 48 Brookings Report, http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/Files/Centers/Saban/Iraq%20Index/index20090226.pdf

207. Page 6 http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/Files/Centers/Saban/Iraq%20Index/index.pdf

208. NR no page just book citation

209. Rosen, op. cit., p. 327.

210. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_life_expectancy

211. See The Ground Truth in Iraq - Blogspot, Life in Iraq Before and After the Invasion, Education for Peace in Iraq Center, August 30, 2009, http://thegroundtruth.blogspot.com/2009/08/life-in-iraq-before-and-after-invasion.html and WHO/UNICEF, Joint Monitoring Programme Report on Progress Towards MDG7 (2008).

212. See The Ground Truth in Iraq – Blogspot, op. cit.

213. From 83% to 77%. WHO/UNICEF, Joint Monitoring Programme Report on Progress Towards MDG7 (2008).

214. "Issues facing children in Iraq", UNICEF – IRAQ, op.cit.

215. Data from WHO/COSIT/KRSO, Iraq Family Health Survey (IFHS) 2006-2007, cited in WHO, COSIT, KRSO, Government of Iraq Ministry of Health, Republic of Iraq: Iraq Family Health Survey – Final Report (2007)

216. "Issues facing children in Iraq", UNICEF – IRAQ, op. cit.

217. Food insecurity reduced from 15 to 3 per cent; prevalence of wasting reduced from 9 per cent in 2005 to 4.7 per cent in 2007 (Data from WFP/COSIT/KRSO, Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping Survey (CFSVA), 2007, cited in WFP/COSIT/KRSO, Comprehensive Food Security and Vulnerability Analysis in Iraq (CFSVA): Iraq, (2008)

218. NCCI Op-Eds, Insecurity Spreads in Iraq: Emerging Patterns of Violence in August 2010, 17 August 2010, http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/reliefweb_pdf/node-364421.pdf

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220. ibid., p. 6.

221. UNHCR, 2011 UNHCR country operations profile – Iraq, Statistical Snapshot (as at January 2010), http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/page?page=49e486426#

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226. ibid.

227. According to IOM data, 99 per cent felt well received by their host communities and 98 per cent felt safe in their current place of residence (IOM Emergency Needs and Monitoring Assessments (September 2009)

228. Government of Iraq, United Nations Country Team, Common Country Assessment Iraq 2009, op. cit., p. 18.

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231. Readers interested in well documented, thorough analysis of this period are recommended to read Peter J. Munson, op. cit. and Nir Rosen, op. cit..

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233. February 15, 2005, statement quoted in Association of Muslim Scholars Press Release, "Tasreeh Sahafi Howl al-Musharaka fi al-'Amaliya al-Siyasiya wa Kitaba al-Dustour" [Press Release Regarding Participation in the Political Process and the Drafting of the Constitution], http://iraq-amsi.org/. See also Allawi, op.cit., p. 183 and Munson, op. cit, p. 201.

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235. For superb discussion of the dynamic within the Madhi Army and the causes and impacts of the ceasefire see NR, esp. Pp. 235 - 236

236. NR 364 - 365

237. NR 365 - 366

238. Christian Peacemaker Teams in Iraq, Iraq after the occupation: Iraqis speak about the state of their country as the US military withdraws, August 2010

239. NR 294 - 295

240. Christian Peacemaker Teams in Iraq, Iraq after the occupation: Iraqis speak about the state of their country as the US military withdraws, August 2010

241. Garrasi, op.cit., p. 4.

242. Jack Healy, "Iraqi Protesters Seek Not a New Regime, but Jobs", *The New-York Times*, February 14, 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/02/15/world/middleeast/15iraq.html?_r=1&partner=rss&emc=rss

243. Iraq Partners Forum Presents, op. cit., p. 9.

244. This should not be taken or understood to mean that people joined militias primarily or solely for job opportunities. Many did so to protect their communities or to seek revenge for attacks upon their communities. Lack of economic and livelihood opportunities, however, was seen by many interviewees as having increase vulnerability and susceptibility to becoming involved in armed conflict.

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246. IAU, Iraq Labour Force Analysis 2003-2008, January 2009.

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250. Iraq Partners Forum Presents, op. cit., p. 10.

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253. Merza, Ali, Policies and economic and social trends in Iraq;2003-2007, paper presented to; International Association of Contemporary Iraqi Studies, third annual conference, july 2008, London. P.22-23. Citied in Sawsan al-Assaf, forth report to *SFP*.

254. "Once they step into their positions, they see their ministry as a family concern and prevent others from coming in or fighting against corruption," said Commission on Integrity head Rahim Hassan al-Uqailee in, "Iraqi Youth in Unique Valentine Rally Sunday", *The Herald*, 13 February 2011, http://www.herald.co.zw/index.php/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2353:iraqi-youth-in-unique-valentine-rally&catid=45:international-news&Itemid=137

255. Yazan al-Shammari, "Maliki Addresses Lack of Services in Iraq", Zawya, 14 February 2011, http://www.zawya.com/story.cfm/sidZAWYA20110215073552

256. Christian Peacemaker Teams in Iraq, Iraq after the occupation: Iraqis speak about the state of their country as the US military withdraws, August 2010, p. 13, http://www.cpt-nl.org/CPT_Report_Iraq_after_Occupation.pdf. See also, Stephen Farrell, "Electricity: Iraq's Other Power Vacuum", *The New York Times*, "At War" Weblog, August 1, 2010, http://atwar.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/08/01/electricity-iraqs-other-power-vacuum/

257. Iraq Poll February 2009, op. cit.

258. BBC News Middle East, Iraq: Key facts and figures, 7 September 2010, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-11095920, According to data supplied by the ministry of electricity, http://www.iauiraq.org/reports/factsheets/Electricity_Factsheet_English.pdf

259. Figures gathered from, European Commission, op. cit.

260. Brookings Institute, April 26, 2011, op. cit., p. 27.

261. Brookings Institute, June 30, 2011, op.cit., p. 24.

262. Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI), Country Briefing: Iraq - Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) At a Glance, July 2010, p. 3, www.ophi.org.uk

263. IAU, Iraq's Transition: Issues and Priorities (2009); data from WFP/COSIT/KRSO, CFSVA 2007, cited in IAU, Vulnerability Analysis: Indicators from the WFP WFP/COSIT/KRSO CFSVA 2007 (2008).

264. Munson, op. cit., pp. 74 – 75, Allawi, op. cit., pp. 360 – 361.

265. It should be noted that these forecasts were highly unrealistic and were a reflection of the poor level of pre-war planning and understanding of the situation in Iraq. At the same time, had the Occupation authorities managed effectively to restore order in Iraq and not to have created a security vacuum or adopted measures which antagonized and escalated violence, together with mismanagement of reconstruction and recovery efforts, then early revenues from oil exports could have contributed to strengthening economic recovery.

266. Munson, op. cit., pp. 24 – 25.

267. Iraq Partners Forum Presents, op. cit., p. 9.

268. ibid, p. 10.

269. Most facts and figures for this section are taken from UNDP, "UNDP helps drought-stricken Iraq combat effects of climate change", Baghdad, 16 December 2009, http://content.undp.org/go/newsroom/2009/december/undp-helps-drought-stricken-iraq-combat-effects-of-climate-change.en;jsessionid=axbWzt...?categoryID=349427&lang=en

270. As noted also elsewhere in this report, "Currently, 3.1 percent of Iraq's population is food insecure, meaning they have no guaranteed access to a sufficient amount of food. A further 9.4 percent is in danger of slipping into food insecurity, according to the UN's Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO)." From UNDP, "UNDP helps drought-stricken Iraq combat effects of climate change", op. cit.

271. Government of Iraq, United Nations Country Team, Common Country Assessment Iraq 2009, op. cit., p. 42.

272. This is corroborated also by the findings of ABC/BBC/NHK, Iraq: Where Things Stand (2009).

273. Brookings Institute, April 26, 2011, op. cit., p. 27.

274. Iraq Partners Forum Presents, op. cit., p. 10.

275. ibid.

276. Garrasi, loc. cit.

277. "Despite limitations, women in Iraq enjoyed a much higher status and many more job opportunities even in Ba'athist Iraq than in other Arab countries. Women attended school, worked, and drove cars, and there was no prescription of Islamic dress. Women were especially well represented the teaching, dentistry, and pharmacy fields, with smaller but significant numbers working as physicians, although only 16 percent of government workers under the Ba'ath were women." Munson, op. cit., pp. 20 – 21.

278. S Al-Assaf, *Iraqi Woman Rights between Humanitarian Intervention and Domestic Violence*, Paper for Islamic and Gender seminar, The School of Religions and Theology, Trinity College, Dublin, April 2009.

279. "These advances eroded, however, in the late 1980s and 1990s as Saddam turned to tribes and certain visions of conservative Islam to legitimate his rule and help to control the populace. In this atmosphere, women's rights were rolled back to a degree." Munson, loc. cit. Cf also Saeid N. Neshat, "A Look into the Women's Movement in Iraq," Farzaneh 6, no. 11 (Spring 2003): 54-65. Human Rights Watch, Background on Women's Status in Iraq Prior to the Fall of the Saddam Hussein Government, Human Rights Watch Briefing Paper, November 2003, http://www.hrw.org/legacy/backgrounder/wrd/iraq-women.htm (accessed June 28, 2008).

280. Iraqi *SfP* research Sawsan al-Assaf notes that many Iraqi women were offended by the portrayal of them by the occupation forces. She cites Iraqi author Haifa Zangana in describing how the American administration and those who worked with them often portrayed Iraqi women as being alliterated, uneducated, and without achievements in the social and cultural field —that they had no role in the development of the country or society, and no rights— needing to be 'liberated'. This view is strongly criticized by many Iraqi women who feel that it is not a realistic portrayal of women in Iraq and that it debases the role of women in Iraq. Zangana, Haifa, Iraqi women and the speech of the American occupation, Beirut, al-Mustaqbal al-Arabi, no. 317, July 2005, p.48

281. Women Watch, Fact Sheet 5, 2005

282. UNAMI, Human Rights Report, 1 January – 30 June 2008, 2 December 2008, http://www.uniraq.org/documents/UNAMI_Human_Rights_Report_January_June_2008_EN.pdf

283. The Ministry is an office under the direction of the Prime Minister. The staff for the ministry consists of 20 persons in the green zone.

284. http://www.aljazeera.net

285. www.un.org./iraqireport.feb2009

286. WHO/COSIT/KRSO/MoH, IFHS, 2006-2007.

287. UNICEF/COSIT/KRSO/MoH, MICS, 2006.

288. Government of Iraq, Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation, National Report on the Status of Human Development 2008, 2008.

COSIT, Labour Force Survey, 2008.

289. Al-Assaf, Iraqi women rights in the middle of international politics, American occupation and domestic struggles, op.cit.

290. Al-Assaf Sawsan, *Woman's political participation under dictatorial regime and democracy of occupation*, research submitted for Centre for Gender Studies, SOAS, university of London, 2010.

291. World Bank/COSIT/KRSO, IHSES 2007. WFP/COSIT/KRSO, CFSVA 2007.

292. "Issues facing children in Iraq " UNICEF – IRAQ, op. cit.

293. 1990 figures from COSIT Directorate of Social and Educational Statistics; 2007 figures from World Bank/COSIT/KRSO, Iraq Household Socio-Economic Survey (IHSES) 2007, cited in World Bank, COSIT, KRSO, Iraq Household Socio-Economic Survey: IHSES-2007 – Tabulation Report (2008).

294. COSIT, Labour Force Survey 2008; World Bank/COSIT/KRSO, IHSES 2007.

295. IOM survey of 1,355 female-headed displaced families who have returned to their places of origin in Female Headed Households www.iomiraq.net/library/

296. UNDP, Gender Equality Strategy 2009 (2009).

297. WHO/COSIT/KRSO/MoH, IFHS 2006-2007.

298. See Statistics Canada, "Age Categories, Life Cycle Groupings", date modified: 2010-03-02, http://www.statcan.gc.ca/concepts/definitions/age2-eng.htm, UN, Provisional Guidelines on Standard International Age Classifications, Department of International, Economic and Social Affairs, Statistical Papers, New York, 1982, http://unstats.un.org/unsd/publication/SeriesM/SeriesM_74e.pdf for age grouping classifications. For statistics (from 2004) see the Iraq Living Conditions Survey http://www.iraqcosit.org/english/pdf/english_tabulation.pdf

299. 4 MILLION Orphan children living in Iraq (Many face abuse and live on the streets with no food), February 24, 2011, http://www.uruknet.info/?new=75324 and http://www.ashams.com/article.php?id=34509

300. On Child Marriage see: "Issues facing children in Iraq " UNICEF – IRAQ, op. cit.. Increase in prostitution and sexual abuse of girl children cited in interviews with Iraqi experts and NGOs working on gender issues and child protection.

301. "Issues facing children in Iraq " UNICEF – IRAQ, op. cit..

302. Data from UNICEF/COSIT/KRSO/Government of Iraq Ministry of Health, Iraq Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2006, cited in UNICEF, COSIT, KRSO, Ministry of Health, Iraq: Monitoring the Situation of Children and Women – Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2006 Final Report: Volume 1 (2007).

303. Positively, there is a clear trend of decreasing child labour with increasing mother's education. This shows the importance for children of empowering women and ensuring women's education. WFP/COSIT/KRSO, CFSVA 2007.

304. The impact of children growing up with different educational systems and learning to see the other as an enemy or threat to their group can be seen in many societies past and present, including Northern Ireland, South Africa, Rwanda and elsewhere. Apparently increasing sectarian conflicts between Shia and Sunni throughout the Middle East given cause for concern at the lasting impacts this may have in Iraq.

305. Rosen, op. cit., p 317.

306. UN Population Division (2008).

307. Iraq Community-Based Conflict Assessments: A Synthesis, page 2

308. MU p. 200

309. MU p. 204

310. MU p. 23

311. Ronald Inglehart, Mansoor Moaddel, and Mark Tessler, "Xenophobia and In-Group Solidarity in Iraq: A Natural Experiment on the Impact of Insecurity," Perspectives on Politics 4, no. 3 (September 2006): 498-500. Davis, Memories of State, 7-8. Cited in MU p. 23

312. "The 2003 invasion and the policies pursued by the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) and subsequent Iraqi governments had exacerbated sectarian divisions, and the Sunni community had been marginalised by Shi'a and Kurdish gains in elections and by the constitutional referendum in 2005. Following the February 2006 bombing of the Al Askari Shia shrine in Samarra, sectarian violence between Sunni and Shia militias led to unprecedented civilian casualties" (ICG, February 2008). PAGE 4 http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/(httpInfoFiles)/3D35B6E12A391265C12577F90045B37E/$file/Iraq_Overview_Dec2010.pdf

313. NCCI, Iraq's Civil Society in Perspective, April 2011, p. 26

314. NCCI, Iraq's Civil Society in Perspective, April 2011, p. 12

315. Johns, and Falih Abdul jabar, The Ethnicity and the State- Kurds in Iraq, Iran and Turkey , 374. Many Kurds interviewed, while stating that they supported a united Iraq, also emphasized a belief in the medium to long-term inevitability of the independence of Kurdistan. It was said in several interviews in the North that "if a referendum were to be held today, 90% or more would vote for independence."

316. Page 2, IRAQ: Political wrangling leaves around 2.8 million displaced Iraqis with no durable solutions in sight, Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC) and Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), 14 December 2010, http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/(httpInfoFiles)/3D35B6E12A391265C12577F90045B37E/$file/Iraq_Overview_Dec2010.pdf. Original Source: Columbia University http://gulf2000.columbia.edu/maps.shtml. For more maps see: www.internal-displacement.org

317. "5,000,000 Tilmeeth 'Iraqi Yuwajjhun 'Ila Madarsihim al-Yawm" [Five Million Iraqi Students Head to Their Schools Today] Al-Dustour, August 16, 1995. Marr, Modern History of Iraq, 295-96. MU p.34

318. Cited in; Al-Assaf, Sawsan, The experience of Iraqi Academics under the occupation, presented paper in the conference WSIUI, SOAS, university of London, April, 2010.

319. "Literacy in Iraq Fact Sheet." United Nations Inter-Agency Information and Analysis Unit. 15 Sept. 20, http://reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900SID/EGUA-89BSWF?OpenDocument

320. "Literacy in Iraq Fact Sheet." United Nations Inter-Agency Information and Analysis Unit. 15 Sept. 20, http://reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/db900SID/EGUA-89BSWF?OpenDocument

321. Brookings Institute, Iraq Index. Tracking Variables of Reconstruction & Security in Post-Saddam Iraq, April 26, 2011, http://www.brookings.edu/iraqindex; James Palmer, "With Iraqi Doctors Fleeing, Prognosis is More Agony," Star-Ledger, April 3, 2006. "Iraq: No Let-Up in the Humanitarian Crisis", International Committee of the Red Cross, March 2008. Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq December 2008, Report to Congress in Accordance with the Department of Defense Appropriations Act 2006 (Section 9010), page 16. Accessed at: http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/pdfs/9010_Report_to_Congress_Dec_08.pdf

322. Jane Savege, *Collateral damage: The impact of war on the health of women and children in Iraq*, Midwifery (2007) 23, 8–12, www.elsevier.com/locate/midw

323. GoI Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works (MoMPW), UN-HABITAT, The State of Iraq Cities Report 2006/2007: Cities in Transition (2007)

324. Al-Assaf, Sawsan, Iraq between Allegations of Humanitarian Intervention and Armed Violence, research for seminar, the School of Religions and Theology, Trinity Collage, Dublin, 2009).

325. Al-Assaf Sawsan, Building a state on a sectarian, ethnic and quota basis, March 25, 2010 Edition 8

326. A more rigorous assessment than that allowed in the scope of this project is required. This should include a broad range of Iraqi actors and organisations as well as their international counterparts, and should aim towards making visible the assumptions underlying approaches to peacebuilding in Iraq and to what extent they are appropriate / relevant. Given the number of years and breadth of engagement, and the importance of the issue in Iraq, it would also be valuable to have a more comprehensive and inclusive process of evaluating and identification of key lessons learned with more consistent engagement by the actual organisations and actors involved as well as the communities in which they are working and the broader range of stakeholders affected. A follow-up or further research work of this kind could valuably contribute to improving the quality of peacebuilding work done in Iraq and help organisations, communities, practitioners, the government and international donors and organisations better identify how they can support sustainable peacebuilding in the country.

327. C Morris, What is Peacebuilding? One Definition, 2000, http://www.peacemakers.ca/publications/peacebuildingdefinition.html

328. L Reychler in Peacebuilding: A Field Guide, cited in Designing Peacebuilding Programmes Presentation Pack International Peace and Development Training Centre - IPDTC) 2010 and Systemic Peacebuilding: Quick Reference Guide (Department of Peace Operations – DPO) 2008.

329. Cf NCCI, Iraq's Civil Society in Perspective for an overview overall of some of the key areas, background, strengths and challenges facing Iraqi civil society.

330. While this is possible, it was also noted by many Iraqi and international organisations that very few international organisations do in fact work in different parts of the country. This may be due (at different times) to restrictions based on travel, difficult access to areas due to violence, prioritisation of certain areas, or responding to and working in areas for which donors have made funds available or which are easier for them to access. It does not, however, necessarily reflect the need for work in areas, with some high need areas not necessarily receiving support / engagement.

331. See the work of the Iraq Helsinki Project http://iraqhelsinkiproject.org/

332. It should be noted that this is a key challenge in many dialogue processes, from Northern Ireland to Sri Lanka and elsewhere. How effectively this could be done in the context of Iraq, and how it could be done, would be important to assess.

333. A question of importance in many dialogue and peace processes, particularly where Track 2 or Track 1.5 processes are intended to support or contribute to official negotiations.

334. Cf. http://www.democraticdialoguenetwork.org/

335. Munson, op. cit., p. 104.

336. NCCI, Iraq's Civil Society in Perspective, April 2011, p. 17, http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Full_Report_476.pdf

337. This does not mean that all programmes were carried out poorly or did not have positive impact. Again, many interviewees cited examples of positive programmes. Given the focus on training by many international organisations from 2003 – 2009, however, many Iraqi and international organisations had experience participating in programmes. According to interviews, a substantial majority of these had significant flaws. These are what are identified here.

338. Use of translators is common in international trainings. Iraqi and international interviewees point out, however, that greater attention could have been given to identifying qualified Iraqi experts or on working to develop quality programmes to train Iraqi trainers early on. The key challenge, however, was not the lack of translators as much as the low quality or inappropriate content provided by many trainers.

339. The choice to hold programmes in Amman was largely driven by security concerns of the organizers and trying to find one location where participants could be brought together from across Iraq. Amman was used as a primary training location by a wide-range of international organisations and UN agencies.

340. The need for greater coordination amongst organisations / agencies working on training was identified in several interviews. Interviewees also suggested that greater efforts should be made to coordinate with national Iraqi counterparts to identify the issues, content and focus of trainings. Throughout much of the period from 2003 – 2010 in particular Iraqis were 'recipients' of trainings but little was done to link trainings with areas / priorities identified by Iraqis for capacity building and competency development. Future training programmes should: i. ensure that they are not duplicating / repeating trainings done by others for the same target groups and; ii. Take a more comprehensive approach to supporting the development of Iraqi capacity and expertise. The best programmes were seen to be those which i. recognized and built upon existing Iraqi expertise while ii. developing sustained and comprehensive engagements to strengthen capacity further.

341. In one of the most comprehensive assessments of training programmes for adults for peacebuilding and conflict transformation, the ARCA project (Associations and Resources for Conflict Management Skills http://www.peacetraining.org/) identified the need to carry out assessments of trainees to verify that people have actually developed the skills, capabilities and competencies covered in trainings. Opportunity to apply these skills, however, can be affected by many factors, including the context, the positions of the individual within their organisation and community, and external developments. See in particular the ARCA Guide to Peace Training: Preparing Adults for Peacework and Nonviolent Intervention in Conflicts and Paths to Peace Education in Europe: Experiences, Lessons Learned and Opportunies, both available at http://www.peacetraining.org/ One of the few training manuals to focus on how trainees can take back what they learn and apply it in their organisations is the Working With Conflict: Skills and Strategies for Action by Responding to Conflict (http://www.respond.org/pages/learning-zone.html)

342. While interviews indicated that most people working in peacebuilding projects in Iraq have focused on specific thematic areas or geographical or conflict issues, their reflections, lessons learned and evaluations from these experiences could contribute to improving / strengthening further peacebuilding efforts. These learnings and reflections should be rigorously evaluated in dialogue and discussion with national and international actors.

343. It should be noted that a UNOPS supported process in Northern Iraq was identified as trying to implement this.

344. NGO Coordination Committee for Iraq, http://www.ncciraq.org/

345. A synthesis of the Assessments can be found at: http://www.iauiraq.org/reports/Community_CA_DG_20%20June.pdf

346. Here, the complete absence of monitoring and evaluation in most projects was cited as a critical gap in many interviews. While this was to some extent understandable in the context which governed in Iraq from 2004 – 2007, it should be improved today. Key materials / resources for evaluation and monitoring include the UNDP Handbook for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation of Development Results (http://www.undp.org/evaluation/handbook/) and Search for Common Ground's Designing for Results: Integrating Monitoring and Evaluation in Conflict Transformation Programs (http://www.sfcg.org/programmes/ilr/ilt_manualpage.html). While UNDP's Handbook is primarily intended for development projects it can usefully be applied for peacebuilding and conflict transformation with some adaptation.

347. See OECD-DAC's 2009 Conflict and Fragility Armed Violence Reduction: Enabling Development for an important discussion of non-war related armed violence on stability, communities and development (http://aoav.org.uk/docs/OECD-Armed-Violence-Reduction.pdf).

348. NCCI, op. cit., pp. 22 – 23.

349. This included a wide-range of demonstrations over various issues where people were shot and killed while demonstrating. Some of these, cited by interviewees, included early demonstrations by former members of the Armed Forces, to be able to contribute in stabilization in Iraq and to have their pensions and rights recognized.

350. Though recent demonstrations from February 2011 on and especially increasing in April 2011 could be cited as examples. The extent to which these were planned and organised as 'nonviolent' demonstrations, however, could be questioned.

351. See also: "Media Training Centers on Rise in Iraq", 17 August 2010, http://www.iraq-businessnews.com/2010/08/17/media-training-centers-on-rise-in-iraq/

352. See contribution by Sawsan Al-Assaf, Fifth Research Report to Searching for Peace in Iraq for a discussion of regional treaties and engagement with and by regional actors in Iraq.

353. C Church and M M Rogers, Designing for Results: Integrating Monitoring and Evaluation in Conflict Transformation Programs, p. 13.

354. For discussion and background on Types of Change, how programme activities contribute to achieving specific goals, and how these in turn contribute to achieving or realising the desired future individuals and organisations are working for see M B Anderson and L Olson, Confronting War: Critical Lessons for Peace Practitioners, The Collaborative for Development Action, 2003; Church and Rogers, op. cit.; J P Lederach, R Neufeldt and H Culbertson, Reflective Peacebuilding: A Planning, Monitoring, and Learning Toolkit, The Jian B. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, University of Notre Dame and Catholic Relief Services Southeast, East Asia Regional Office, 2007.

355. Designing for Peacebuilding Programmes Slide Pack, International Peace and Development Training Centre (IPDTC) – PATRIR, 2009

356. OECD-DAC, Encouraging Effective Evaluation of Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Activities: Towards DAC Guidance, Off-print of the OECD Journal on Development 2007, Volume 8, No 3, 2007, http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/52/3/39660852.pdf

357. Cite the brief survey of peacebuilding initiatives by USIP and ensure it's in the bibliography

358. The legal checkpoints are the ones hired by the Government to check the people and the cars. But in many cases you might find a militia or terrorist were established a temporary checkpoint looking for some people or for money. There is no link between these check points, each group is working in a certain area. For example; if the NGO staff want to travel from the North to Baghdad 400 Kilometers, at least he has to pass approximately 10-15 illegal check points from different terrorist groups. And this number is changing all the time.

359. Hoffman, Sword and Salve, p153.

360. "Microfinance is relatively new to Iraq, and the current Iraqi environment presents unique challenges for effective provision of financial services to the poor and their enterprises, as well as to small businesses in general. The supply of financial services for Iraqi micro and small businesses is very limited, while households at the bottom of the economic pyramid are not considered bankable. Prior to May 2003, there were no identified formal sources of microfinance in Iraq". http://www.izdihar-iraq.com/resources/papers_pdfs/izdihar_iraq-microfinance_strategy_031607_final_web.pdf

361. Hoffman, Sword and Salve, p 145.

362. Barbara Brubacher, "Role in Conflict – NGOs and Military Occupation in Iraq," International society for third sector research (2003), http://atlas-conferences.com/c/a/m/k/69.htm.

363. Rolled, Julia, "Christian aid to Iraq create controversy," Group (2003), http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3835/is_200307/ai_n9293876. Allawi, op. cit., p. 185. The US Government and its allies had been told by several Iraqi exiled groups that this was the welcome they would receive. Even minimal knowledge / awareness of these groups own objectives, the US' previous history with Iraq from the first Gulf War and the sanctions-period, or minimal knowledge of the history of warfare, should have led US planners to have been sceptical of these claims.

About the Institute for Active Nonviolence

an iniative of Nova-Social Innovation

The Institute of Active Non-Violence supports international peace-building initiatives in conflict situations. The institute was born from civil society's efforts to build peace, justice, dignity and equity.

In co-operation with a network of experts and activists from the Middle East, North Africa, Europe and America, the Institute supports those non-violent movements which are working on social transformation, and developing mechanisms for civilian peace interventions to protect vulnerable groups in society in conflict situations.

As a committed and political independent actor, the Institute promotes initiatives, innovative ideas, research and training programs while advocating for the defense, security and external action of political actors in Europe and other international sectors.

With its headquarters in the Mediterranean city of Barcelona, the Institute is a project of the Nova-Social Innovation Centre. Nova is registered as a non-governmental organization (NGO) and it is qualified organization before the United Nations. The Institute raises funds from committed citizens and public institutions.

About the Department of Peace Operations (DPO)

The Department of Peace Operations (DPO) works upon request from conflict parties and local, national and international organisations and agencies to support violence prevention, peacebuilding, mediation, and post-war recovery.

The mission of the DPO is

- to strengthen capacities and infrastructures for peace operations,
- to gather best-practices and lessons learnt,
- to improve the quality and effectiveness of peacebuilding programmes in conflict affected countries,
- and support on-going mediation and peace processes.

DPO works with both state and non-state actors and is guided by a clear Code of Conduct. Drawing upon a global body of experience in peacebuilding and conflict transformation, and continual evaluation of lessons learned from the field, it represents one of the most capable pools of operational knowledge and comprehensive, in-depth expertise for peacebuilding, mediation, and post-war recovery.

DPO experts include practitioners, analysts, diplomats, and current and former military. Its global roster provides on-call available practitioners and civilian experts whose work is to support local, national and international peacebuilding and peace engagements.

DPO also provides extended consultations and organisation and policy development support for governments and national and international organisations to improve their effectiveness and impact for peacebuilding and conflict transformation.

Searching for Peace in Iraq is a "must read" for government officials, policy makers, and national and international experts, analysts and civil society workers trying to understand what has taken place in Iraq since 2003 and what can be done to help contribute to improving stabilization, peacebuilding, and a better future for all the people of Iraq.

Bringing together national Iraqi and international researchers and experts in peacebuilding, transition and post-war recovery, SfP Iraq was a unique initiative which aimed to understand and bring forward the complexity of conflict factors and dynamics in Iraq.

The publication includes three distinct but equally important sections.
Part 1 on Strategic Conflict Intelligence goes into the immediate period following the invasion of Iraq. Major gaps, breakdowns and policy failures are identified as having directly contributed to the collapse of order and rise of wide-spread violence in the country.

Part 2 is made up of a Fault Lines analysis looking at politics and governance, security, economic, gender, youth, society and culture. Drawing upon a wealth of data from interviews and publications by local and international organisations and agencies it highlights some of the key challenges facing Iraq.

Part 3, presents a first attempt at a Cumulative Impact Assessment on what is being done for peacebuilding in Iraq primarily by national and international civil society organisations. It identifies key areas of work as well as major challenges, and the actual impact these programmes are having.

Carried out over nearly two years, the project included the review of thousands of pages of articles and analysis, as well as hundreds of interviews with:
- National and international experts and analysts
- Government officials and political party representatives and experts
- Local, national and international civil society workers
- Staff of UN agencies, embassies and donors
- Academics, journalists and writers

This research makes visible the vastly different opinions on what is happening in the country while also identifying key trends, dynamics and challenges. For anyone concerned with the future of Iraq, and with an honest account of the challenges and difficulties facing the country, Searching for Peace in Iraq is a critical and important publication.

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This investigation is also available electronically at: www.nova.cat