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“ The destruction of cultural heritage in Iraq is not only an irreparable loss for Iraq, it is a loss for all humankind, and we must respond together ”
Irina Bokova, Director General of UNESCO



UNESCO Executive Board endorses UNESCO's actions in Iraq

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Participants of UNESCO symposium call to protect and promote the diversity of cultural expressions in Iraq

30 December 2015: Participants of a UNESCO symposium held in Erbil expressed grave concerns about the threats to the diversity of cultural expressions in Iraq at a time when communities are being increasingly marginalized and persecuted because of their ethnic and religious backgrounds. [Continued on page 8](#)



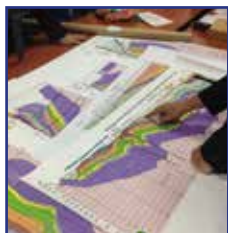
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Geoscientists met to identify priority groundwater systems in Iraq

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End of year interview with Axel Plathe, Director of UNESCO Office for Iraq

2015 witnessed a dramatically great number of attacks on Iraq's cultural heritage, which has been termed as 'cultural cleansing'. How has UNESCO reacted in this regard?

We have worked, and are working, with our counterparts in the government to assess the damages and to plan safeguarding activities. We have been particularly concerned by the increased risks of illicit trafficking of looted objects and are working within the framework of UN Security Council Resolution 2199 to prevent this. And we are alerting the international community on the destructions that we are sometimes helplessly witnessing. The #Unite4Heritage campaign which was launched by Director General, Irina Bokova at the University of Baghdad in March 2015 is part of our response to the destruction and pillage of cultural heritage in conflict zones.

As of November 2015, there were approximately 250,000 Syrian refugees and over 3 million IDPs residing across Iraq and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. How has UNESCO intervened in providing educational opportunities to these vulnerable communities?

Hundreds of thousands of girls and boys and young adults among the more than three million internally displaced persons have no access to education. Thanks to donations from the Japanese Government and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, we were able to implement projects that will benefit a total of 24,000 adolescents. Our efforts in this area is best reflected in the figures:
4,500 Syrian refugees will have access to secondary education.
14,500 girls from IDP communities will be provided catch up classes and quality secondary education.
16 schools across Dohuk have been renovated, enabling over 7000 secondary age students access to quality secondary education.
5 schools have been constructed across the Kurdistan Region, which will cater for over 1300 students.
180 teachers received training and 220 Syrian and IDP teachers will receive training

In your opinion, should UNESCO focus exclusively on education for IDPs and refugees?

At UNESCO, we are first and foremost alarmed by the impact of the crisis on the future of the young generation whether in Iraq, Syria or elsewhere; that is why we consider providing quality education opportunities for IDPs and refugees of high importance.

However, with that being said we must also focus on the more development oriented aspect of UNESCO's work in education. This year we launched an ambitious five year project to reform technical and vocational education in Iraq, which aims to enhance the role of TVET in Iraq's economic and social development, by providing students with high quality education and training up to international standards.

Our capacity building projects help modernize the education sector, in the areas of curriculum development and teacher training. This year, we continued to work on developing the mathematics and science curricula for grades 4, 5 and 6. We started to focus more on humanities and have started to build capacities of Iraqi curriculum developers to prepare more inclusive humanities curricula.

In higher education, we continue to work with the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research to introduce higher education institutions to the best practices in quality management and quality assurance. To contribute to social cohesion in Iraq, a UNESCO Chair on "Development of Interreligious Dialogue Studies in the Islamic World" at Kufa University was established.

Iraq remains one of the most dangerous countries for journalists to work in, the current crisis has only emphasized this fact. What initiatives has UNESCO spearheaded to foster press freedom and the safety of journalists?

We are in the process of carrying out a comprehensive assessment of journalist's safety in Iraq. The assessment aims at establishing an evidence-based baseline about the state of journalists' safety and the impunity of crimes against them. UNESCO also worked with the concerned legislative, judicial, executive and regulatory bodies to launch an initiative that will better monitor and end crimes against journalists.

Not many people know that the "S" in UNESCO stands for Sciences. How can sciences provide solutions for Iraq's challenges?

An example of how UNESCO harnesses the sciences to provide solutions for Iraq's economic, social and environmental challenges is our engagement in the area of natural sciences, in our project "Advanced Survey of Hydrogeological Resources in Iraq". It is funded by the European Union and aims at improving national capacities in exploring and integrating management of groundwater resources. Data sets have been collected for identifying potential groundwater resources and hydrogeological modelling.

UNESCO Executive Board endorses UNESCO's action in Iraq

25 October 2015 - The 58 Members of UNESCO's Executive Board, who completed the work of their 197th session in Paris in October, acknowledged with appreciation the results achieved in the implementation of UNESCO's action in Iraq, in particular its capacity building activities and by contributing to address the most urgent humanitarian needs of affected population.

The Executive Board's debate on Iraq was based on a report on UNESCO's action in favour of cultural and educational institutions in Iraq during the period from July 2014 to July 2015.

During the reporting period, UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova visited Iraq twice, in November 2014 and in March 2015, to express UNESCO's solidarity and scale up its response to the evolving crisis, particularly by providing access to quality education for displaced and refugee youth, and protecting the country's rich cultural heritage.

The Board expressed its gratitude to all donors and multilateral



and private sector partners for their substantial contribution to UNESCO's action in favour of the Iraqi people and appealed to them to continue assisting UNESCO in its efforts, in particular to foster reconstruction, dialogue and the safeguarding of Iraq's cultural heritage.



Education

Adult literacy improves by 5% in 5 years

8 September 2015 – As the world celebrates International Literacy Day on 8 September to highlight the importance of literacy as a human right and as a force for social and economic development. This year, the UNESCO Office for Iraq observed International Literacy Day by reflecting on its achievements in combating illiteracy in Iraq.

The UNESCO Office for Iraq continues to implement the five year project “Literacy Initiative for Empowerment” funded by the Education Above All Foundation, a global initiative by Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser of Qatar, UNESCO special envoy for basic and higher education. The project, which started in 2010, aims at providing adult literacy and life skills development programmes.

With the project in its final stages of implementation, several milestones in literacy interventions have been achieved jointly with the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government. In 2012, the National Literacy Campaign that aimed at achieving a 50 percent reduction of illiteracy in Iraq by 2015 was successfully launched, with UNESCO providing technical assistance and capacity building for the implementation of the campaign. In addition to that, 143 Community Learning Centres in Iraq were established benefiting over 1,000,000 beneficiaries with 72 percent women enrolled in literacy and life skills programmes.

Adult illiteracy in Iraq improved from 74 percent in 2010 to 79 percent in 2013.

UNESCO contracts IDP parents to build school desks to help their children continue their education

1 July 2015 - Ahmad Yousef was among 18 IDPs who were contracted by UNESCO to build 450 school desks for their children and other displaced children across the country. A community activity that helps secure their children’s education as well as be a part of their child’s educational journey.

“I am happy that I am able to contribute to my child’s education by providing the schools with more desks to accommodate more students,” said Yousef.

The construction of the desks will help 1000 students receive a better quality education while in displacement. It made parents not only engaged in their children’s education but is also a significant income generating activity that has benefited many families.

Thousands of IDP children now living with their families in camps across the country are being denied their right to a quality education as a result of the ongoing conflict. Displacement has disrupted the educational gains of school aged children and the resources for providing children chances of receiving a quality education are very limited.

Schools have been stretched to capacity, with children having to sit on the floor because of the limited number of desks. There

are also not enough books or supplies to accommodate all the students.

“We want our children to receive an education despite the circumstances that they are in. The school desks will ensure that more children are able to attend school”, said Zainab, a mother working on building the desks.

UNESCO Office for Iraq, with funds from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has responded to the humanitarian crisis with the opening of five new schools for students of IDP communities, since the beginning of 2015 within the framework of the project ‘Providing access to quality education to adolescents and young adults in conflict-affected areas in Iraq’.

Since the school openings, students attended catch up classes that ran till the end of June in order to prepare them for the new academic year.



New mathematics, sciences and humanities curricula.



11 December 2015 - UNESCO continued in its efforts to contribute to the modernization of curricula in Iraq by holding a number of workshops to develop new curricula in the areas of mathematics and science for grades 5, and 6. In addition, a five day workshop was organized to introduce the mathematics and science process of curriculum development to humanities subjects, which include Arabic, English and Religion.

The workshop for developing instructional material for mathematics and science for grades 5 and 6 was held from 18 to 22 October in Amman and provided some 30 Iraqi curriculum specialists from the Ministries of Education in Baghdad and Erbil with better skills to prepare new drafts of instructional materials.

Working in a concrete, hands-on approach, the participants prepared drafts of the first few units of the mathematics, chemistry, physics and biology textbooks. The units were reviewed by UNESCO experts and returned to the participants to guide them in preparing the remaining units, which will be handed back to the experts for editing and completion. A one day meeting was also held dedicated to the 'Development of a National Framework for Assessments and Exams', with the attendance of 10 officials from the Ministries of Education and Higher Education and Scientific Research in Baghdad and Erbil. Participants discussed the current structure of examinations and assessments in terms of student and teacher evaluation as a first step towards developing a new national framework for examinations.

Moreover, 55 humanities curricula experts from the Ministries of Education in Baghdad and Erbil attended a five day workshop from 6 to 10 December, 2015. Participants were first introduced to the process used to develop the mathematics and science curricula. They then used this process to assess and evaluate the current humanities curricula in place for all grades. The workshop also addressed ways in which Global Citizenship Skills can be integrated into the new humanities curricula.

Both workshops were held in the framework of the project 'Developing New Iraqi Curricula', in cooperation with the Education Above All, a global initiative by sheikh Mozah Bint Nasser of Qatar, UNESCO special envoy for basic and higher education.

More than 600 rural women to attend literacy and life skills classes

7 December, 2015 - Baghdad: On 9 July UNESCO joined UN Women, UNFPA, FAO and the Ministry of Women Affairs of the Kurdistan Regional Government in a project with the Ministry of Women Affairs to foster the socio-economic status of girls and women in rural areas in Iraq. UNESCO's special focus is on helping them enhance their literacy skills.

Since then UNESCO has been working jointly with partner UN organizations and the relevant ministries of the government as well as with partners from civil society and women NGOs to address the needs of the most vulnerable women and girls in marginalized rural communities, including those who are internally displaced or heads of households.

UNESCO aims to provide 600 women with literacy and life skills classes by the end of the project. 10 temporary Community Learning Centres have been set up in schools managed by the Ministry of Education of the Kurdistan Regional Government, across the three governorates Erbil, Dohuk and Sulaymaniyah. In addition, several community based activities have been carried out in cooperation with women associations and community leaders to increase access to literacy classes and life skills training.



The UN organizations will jointly provide rural women in selected governorates with a wide range of services such as education, leadership skills training, vocational training, legal services, psycho-social support and awareness raising about their rights and reproductive health, among others. A network of 'Rural Women Volunteers' is planned to be established that will help mobilize the communities to alert girls and women on their rights and on issues related to reproductive health and gender-based violence.

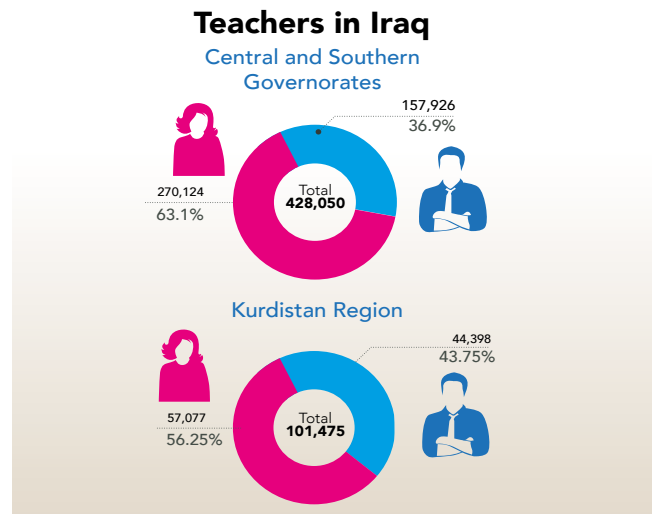
Designing training packages for sciences and mathematics teachers

22 November 2015 - Within the framework of the Teacher Education and Training project, a four day workshop titled 'Designing training packages for science and mathematics grades 11 and 12' was held at the Le Meridian Hotel in Amman, Jordan from 16 to 19 December 2016.

The workshop was co-run by four regional experts in science and mathematics and it aimed at presenting attendees with the latest methodologies in designing teacher training packages that reflect the principles of active student centered learning. The participants comprised of 39 educational supervisors and teacher trainers from the Kurdistan Regional Government.

The participants were split into four working groups according to their areas of specialty (chemistry, physics, biology and mathematics) to work on designing sample teacher training packages for grades 11 and 12 in order to adequately prepare teachers to deliver the curriculums.

Participants also took turns to present the sample lessons that they prepared, the floor was then open to constructive remarks and feedback by their peers on ways in which the lessons can be improved. The participants will continue to work on the training packages which will be sent to the experts for review by February 2016.



The Teacher Education and Training project is implemented in cooperation with Education Above All, a global initiative funded by Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser of Qatar, UNESCO special envoy for basic and higher education.

Ensuring quality management and quality assurance in higher education institutions

26 November 2015 - In an effort to improve quality management, quality assurance and leadership within higher education institutions in Iraq, UNESCO organized a series of interactive workshops in Amman during October and November.

The workshop titled 'Training Workshop on Quality Management and Leadership' was held from 26 to 30 October 2015 was organized further to a consultation held earlier this year that brought together key stakeholders of the higher education sector to reflect on the needs and priorities of higher education post 2015. Key areas noted during the February workshop included quality management, capacity building and a more efficient system of governance.

Organized in cooperation with the RWTH-Aachen University, Germany, the workshop presented the Aachen Quality Management Model (AQMM), an organizational framework for quality-related structures and tasks that provides a blueprint to improve university governance.

The workshop was attended by officials from the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research and heads of quality management departments from 13 universities across the country. Participants were familiarized with new tools and concepts that will enable the practical and immediate use of effective management tools to improve management and governance in higher education institutions and ministry departments.

In addition to that, Iraqi universities discussed their progress in the implementation of quality improvement measures during two

consecutive workshops that the UNESCO Office for Iraq organized from 22 to 25 November 2015 in partnership with senior experts from the "Network of Iraqi Scientists Abroad" (NISA) forming the quality assurance review group.

The workshops concluded with a final declaration and a set of recommendations related to the sustainability of the quality project outcomes mainly through a closer follow-up by the Ministries of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MoHESRs) of the Federal Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government of the continuation of the quality assurance processes initiated by UNESCO since 2011.

The first workshop titled 'Review of quality improvement plans of pilot colleges of engineering –phase-II' (22 and 24 November) consisted of reviewing and assessing the QIPs of the 12 participating universities to ensure execution of QIPs and issue suggestions for improvements, taking into consideration the feedback and recommendations that were made earlier this year during a site visit to the universities.

The second workshop titled 'Assuring Continuous Improvement through Quality Improvement Planning' evaluated and monitored the progress already made on implementing the QIPs in the universities of phase 1 over the past five years and aimed to raise awareness amongst higher education officials and staff members about the need for a national quality assurance and accreditation framework.



Natural Sciences

Geoscientists met to identify priority groundwater systems in Iraq

15 July 2015 - High-ranking government officials of the Iraqi Ministry of Water Resources and groundwater experts of the UNESCO Office for Iraq met last week in Amman for a two day work seminar in order to discuss the current status of the European Union funded project 'Advanced Survey of Hydrogeological Resources in Iraq – Phase II' (ASHRI-2).

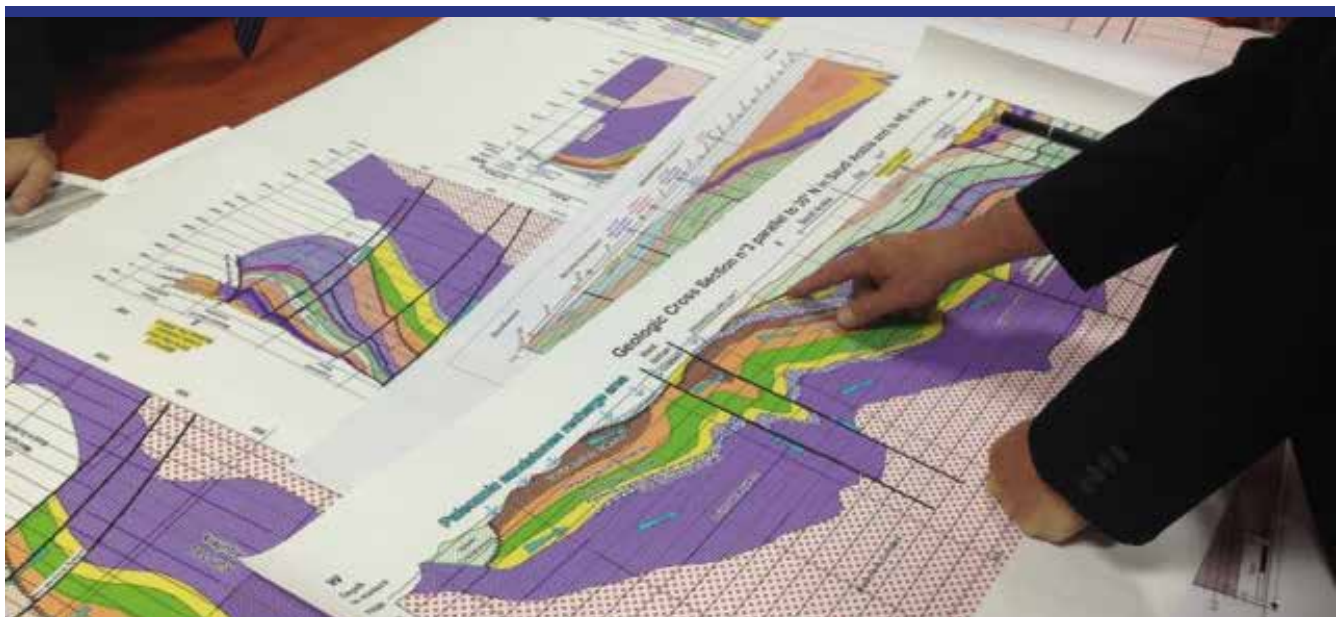
The seminar aimed at identifying priority groundwater systems in Iraq which will be subject to in-depth assessments of deep groundwater bodies and associated hydrodynamics during the course of ASHRI-2. Upcoming capacity building programmes to be implemented throughout the coming months were discussed, forming the next stage of the project.

The work-seminar was held from 13 to 14 July 2015 at the Amman premises of the UNESCO Office for Iraq, and brought together geoscientific experts, advisors from the Ministry of Water of Iraq and the Prime Ministers Advisory Council, as well as consultants from involved cooperating partners of the consulting industry, namely SGI, RTI, T-Zero and the US Geological Survey.

The Director General of the General Commission of Ground Water, Ministry of Water Resources, Baghdad, Dhafir Abdullah Hussein, underlined the crucial importance of the meeting stating 'this technical meeting has enabled us to address, and find concrete solutions to a number of technical obstacles that we were facing. More importantly, we were able to identify and agree, in a short amount of time, on the priority groundwater systems, which will be surveyed in Iraq.'

A total of six areas were agreed upon, subject to further refining selection processes during consecutive geo-scientific assessments to be followed during the coming weeks.

The ASHRI-2 project that started in 2013 has an implementation period of three years building upon existing knowledge about the hydrogeological conditions of Iraq, which was established by UNESCO during Phase 1 of the project in 2010, and on officially published data and scientific information.





Culture

UNESCO and UNAMI call for protection of diversity and prevention of incitement on International Tolerance Day

17 November 2015 - In observation of the International Day for Tolerance, celebrated around the world on 17 November 2015, UNAMI and UNESCO organized conferences in Baghdad and Erbil on the Protection of Diversity and Prevention of Incitement.

In Baghdad, the event was held on 16 November 2015 and was attended by Saleem Al-Jubouri, the Speaker of the Council of Representatives, Feryad Rwanduzi, the Minister of Culture and the Heads of the Shiite and Sunni Endowment and many other dignitaries.

A few days later, a similar event was held in Erbil. It was organized in collaboration with the Ministry of Endowment and Religious Affairs of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, and was attended by the Minister of Education, Pishtivan Sadiq and members of the Kurdistan Region's parliament, civil society and religious leaders.

The Kurdistan Region of Iraq was underlined as a model of tolerance and a safe haven for millions of minority community members and IDPs.

UNESCO emphasised that just and impartial legislation rooted in the principles of human rights and legislative framework that entrench the promotion and protection of the diversity of cultural expressions were a prerequisite for tolerance to prevail.

Participants of both conferences pledged to use their political and social standing to help change behaviours, attitudes and stereotypes. They underlined the importance of legal provisions to celebrate diversity, protect minorities and create a culture of peaceful co-existence and tolerance. They further stressed the role of education in learning to live together through the revision of curricula and better training of teachers and religious leaders.

Marshlands: key to fostering Iraq's cultural diversity

15 November 2015 – "We stand ready to help safeguard the cultural and natural heritage of the Marshlands that are emblematic for Iraq's unique heritage of diversity and tolerance", said Deputy Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General for Iraq György Busztin and UNESCO Representative to Iraq Axel Plathe at the conclusion of a two-day visit to the marshes and the relict cultural landscape of the Mesopotamian cities.

The visit included a meeting with community leaders and the mayor of Chabayish, who voiced their commitment to safeguard this important natural and cultural heritage.

The visit was organized as the Government of Iraq has recently submitted the nomination for the inclusion of the Marshlands and the cities of Ur, Uruk and Eridu in the UNESCO World Heritage List.

Located in the southern part of Iraq, the Mesopotamian Marshlands, hosts a freshwater eco-system and provides a habitat for wildlife, hosting several species of birds and fish.

Southern Iraq is the place of some of the earliest urban centres in the world, such as Uruk, Ur and Eridu. Thus, it is the place that witnessed the origin of writing, some of the earliest monumental architecture, and the emergence of complex societies in southern Mesopotamia, dubbed as the Cradle of Civilization. The Sumerian



culture, known for its cuneiform texts, took its inspiration from these wetlands.

The management of the Marshlands of Mesopotamia are of a priority for the conservation of the natural ecosystem and for maintaining the sustainable livelihood of a community.

Participants of UNESCO symposium call to protect and promote the diversity of cultural expressions in Iraq

30 December 2015 - Participants of a UNESCO symposium held in Erbil expressed grave concerns about the threats to the diversity of cultural expressions in Iraq at a time when communities are being increasingly marginalized and persecuted because of their ethnic and religious backgrounds. They called for urgent action to stop cultural cleansing and to protect and promote Iraq's cultural diversity.

Under the patronage of the Minister of Culture, the symposium "Threats to the Diversity of Cultural Expressions and Means for Addressing its Protection and Promotion" was held within the framework of the implementation of the 2005 Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions and UNESCO's #Unite4Heritage campaign.

Several communities in Iraq have been directly targeted by extremists because of their religion and ethnicity, and their cultural and religious heritage has been systematically and intentionally destroyed. Many of them have lost the connections with their original cultural milieu and their cultural practices were often irreversibly disrupted.

In order to stop this cultural cleansing, participants of the conference recommended a set of actions for safeguarding the rich diversity of their cultures and called for international support in implementing the actions.

An exhibition on the cultural heritage and diversity of Iraq through the eyes of young artists from among displaced communities was also on display. The exhibition was an opportunity to raise



awareness about the importance of fostering art and creativity in Iraq, despite the ongoing conflict.

"Every artist has an inspiration and my inspiration comes from our heritage and history, which is so rich and diverse. This is the basis of our values, our creativity, and our art" said Osama Ayad, one of the participating artists. "

Respect for cultural pluralism and diversity are essential for reconciliation and building peace. The recognition of the contributions of the various communities to society, while respecting cultural diversity, is vital to ensuring the welfare of all of its members, which in turn is a major factor for social cohesion.

Iraqi professionals return from Italy with new skills for heritage conservation



9 September 2015 - Iraqi experts from the Provincial Council and the Governorate of Nineveh, the municipality of Mosul and Nineveh's Antiquities Department participated in a tailor made training course on architectural conservation in Italy.

The two week training that was organized by UNESCO and Scuola Europea dei Mestieri (SEUM) in September in Arezzo, Tuscany, was one of the activities of the project 'The study and documentation for the stabilization and conservation of Al-Hadba Minaret in Mosul'.

The workshops addressed such varied topics as 'Safety in building and restoration works', 'Theory of restoration', 'Introduction to materials', 'Urban scale restoration', 'Importance of history in restoration design', and 'Promotion, maintenance and management of artworks'.

The participants of the study tour also visited historical sites under restoration in the cities of Arezzo, Florence, Pisa, Anghiari, Venice and Rome to get first-hand exposure to a few of the most emblematic historical buildings and archaeological sites under restoration.

The group also met with Italian authorities, associations, enterprises and suppliers including the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, the Municipality of Arezzo and the Professional Association of Architects.

Upon their return to Iraq, participants agreed that the study tour has equipped them with the knowledge and tools for better documenting, managing and restoring of heritage sites.

UNESCO and Iraq launch project for conservation of World Heritage site of Samarra

29 July 2015 - UNESCO and Iraq signed an agreement for the conservation and management of the World Heritage site of Samarra Archaeological City, which will start with the restoration of the Great Mosque and Al-Malwiyah Minaret. The site has been on UNESCO's List of World Heritage in Danger since 2007.

The agreement was signed at UNESCO's Headquarters in Paris by Ahmed Abdullah Abed, Iraqi Minister of State of Governorate and Parliamentary Affairs, Ammar Hikmeit Abdulhasan, deputy Governor of Salah-Al-Din, and Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO. The Governorate of Salah-Al-Din will fund the USD 853,000 project.

All the speakers at the event emphasized the fact that the agreement expressed a strong commitment to safeguarding the cultural heritage of Iraq, which is facing an unprecedented threat. "When extremists seek to destroy culture and persecute individuals on cultural and religious grounds, we must also respond with more culture, with more knowledge, with more

protection measures, and this is precisely what we do here today," said the Director-General of UNESCO.

Minister Ahmed Abdullah Abed described the site of Samarra as "one of the most emblematic places of Islamic civilization" and said that its preservation was an important part of the war against terrorism taking place in Iraq.

The project's first phase will be conducted over 18 months and will focus on assessing the state of conservation of the site, monitor its conditions, strengthen local capacities through the exchange of knowledge and experience, training of archaeologists, conservation specialists, architects and other professions involved in the protection and management of the property, draft conservation and management plans according to international standards and raise awareness of the local community on the importance of safeguarding historical and archaeological resource as a means of safeguarding cultural identity.

Hatra added to the List of World Heritage in Danger

1 July 2015 — During the 39th session of the World Heritage Committee which was held from 28 June to 8 July 2015 in Bonn, Germany, the World Heritage site of Hatra in Iraq was inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger due to damage inflicted to the property by armed groups.

Many World Heritage Committee members voiced concern about the state of Iraqi heritage following acts of intentional destruction. They also declared their willingness to help Iraq as

soon as the situation on the ground will allow them to do so. The Committee stressed that the danger listing of Hatra was a way to rally the support of the international community for the country's heritage.

Two other Iraqi sites are inscribed on the World Heritage List in Danger: Ashur (inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2003) and Samara Archaeological City (inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2007).

Celebrating Erbil Citadel's first anniversary of its inscription on the World Heritage List



25 June 2015 - The first anniversary of the inscription of Erbil Citadel on the World Heritage List was celebrated in Erbil in the presence of government officials, stakeholders, diplomats and members of the community.

The event that was organized by the High Commission for Erbil Citadel Revitalization was an opportunity for recalling the World Heritage Convention as a unique legal instrument for the protection of the world's natural and cultural heritage, and for recognizing the value of heritage to communities.

The event was also an occasion for calling upon everyone to join the #Unite4Heritage campaign, which aims to send messages of tolerance, unity and solidarity, for building peace.

Since 2007, several projects aiming at the conservation and revitalization of the Citadel have been initiated by the Kurdistan Regional Government and implemented through the High Commission for the Erbil Citadel Revitalization (HCECR) and UNESCO. In 2010, UNESCO and the Kurdistan Regional Government signed a \$12 million project to complete Phase II of the Erbil citadel Revitalization Project. During this phase, UNESCO has carried out conservation and restoration projects for 14 buildings that were considered as some of the most vulnerable, as well as the preparation of the Erbil Citadel Management plan along with a legal framework to improve the effectiveness of site protection and management.

Iraqi national initiative to combat impunity for crimes against Journalists launched in Baghdad

12 November 2015- During a dialogue event held in partnership with Iraqi legislative and executive authorities, representatives from the Council of Ministers and the Presidency of the Republic of Iraq, UNESCO, the Human Rights Commission in Iraq and the Iraqi Journalists Syndicate urged the Iraqi authorities to take all necessary measures – through developing legislation, capacity building and adequate resources – to ensure that investigations and trials relating to crimes against journalists in Iraq are undertaken.

The initiative to end impunity for crimes against journalists in Iraq was launched at an event held to observe the 'International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists', celebrated annually on 2 November by the United Nations. The event concluded with the formulation of a set of concrete commitments to take steps to fight impunity and protect journalists.

The participants of the event agreed on the following areas:

1. Re-investigate all inconclusive murder cases that took place against journalists, in addition to investigating threats and violent attacks that journalists and media professionals have faced in the past few years.
2. Carry out a comprehensive analysis of the safety situation of Iraqi journalists and propose a set of indicators to combat and end impunity for crimes against journalists and media professionals.
3. Enhance the safety of journalists through capacity building, developing legislation, achieving fairness in judicial and executive proceedings of media related issues.
4. Create a joint operations room controlled by the concerned legislative, judicial, executive and regulatory bodies to follow up on future crimes, violations and/or breaches that take place against journalists and media organizations in the country.
5. Amend the legislation currently in place and formulate new and comprehensive legislation with regards to freedom of expression, and the protection of journalists to ensure that the rights of Iraqi journalists are in line with global changes and the rapid developments in the areas of freedom of expression, media and journalism.



UNESCO training material helps improve relations between journalists and Iraqi police



15 September 2015 – UNESCO’s manual “Freedom of Expression and Public Order” was the main reference of a series of workshops to improve the relations between police and journalists in Iraq. The training events were organized by the Burj Babel Organization with the logistical support from the International Media Support.

The UNESCO manual, on which the training was based, was developed as part of a programme for the training of security forces on human rights, freedom of expression and the safety of journalists in Tunisia.

It aims at equipping members of the security forces with the tools to maintain public order in compliance with human rights

and freedom of expression, while also guaranteeing the security of journalists. It provides legal references and tools with the aim of promoting transparency, facilitating and improving relations between security forces and the media, and encouraging respect for the safety of journalists in the field.

The workshops “Maintaining order and freedom of expression” started in August 2015 in Baghdad. They covered topics such as ‘Journalism, democracy, and freedom of expression’, ‘Protection of journalists’, ‘Journalistic tools to cover conflicts, riots, and demonstrations’, ‘Conflict Sensitive reporting’, ‘Enabling journalists to obtain the information they need from security forces’ and ‘Security measures implemented in dealing with the media’.

UNESCO, HRCI and IJS call for ending impunity for crimes against journalist in Iraq

2 November, 2015 - “We urge the Iraqi authorities to take all necessary measures – through developing legislation, capacity building and adequate resources – to ensure that investigations and trials relating to crime against journalists in Iraq are undertaken”, declare UNESCO Representative to Iraq Axel Plathe, Human Rights Commissioner Athmar al Shatry and Iraqi Journalists Syndicate President Moaid Al-Lami in a joint statement on the occasion of the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists.

“The near complete impunity for the perpetrators of crimes against journalists goes against everything that we stand for, our shared value and our common objectives”, state the three organizations.

In Iraq, the safety situation of journalist remains dramatic with an unacceptably high number of attacks against journalists and continuous impunity of those acts with more than 100 cases of assassinations of journalists not thoroughly investigated.

UNESCO, the High Commission of Human Rights for Iraq (HRCI) and the Iraqi Journalists Syndicate (IJS) have undertaken a variety

of initiatives to address the issue of safety of journalists over the past years within the framework of the UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity.

For example, UNESCO and IJS signed a project agreement for enhancing Iraqi journalists’ capacities in conflict-sensitive reporting. UNESCO, in cooperation with a local NGO, is developing a journalists’ safety index in Iraq. As part of its International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC), UNESCO also held three workshops on investigative writing and reporting. HRCI is monitoring the media situation and prepares regularly reports on violence against journalists, and has also formulated a strategy in accordance with national law that sets up a process of receiving complaints, investigating them and passing along the results of the investigation to the Prosecutor General and the Media Commission.

The three organizations and other partners observed the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists with a dialogue event on “Fostering the prosecution of crimes against journalists in Iraq” that was held on 12 November 2015 in Baghdad.

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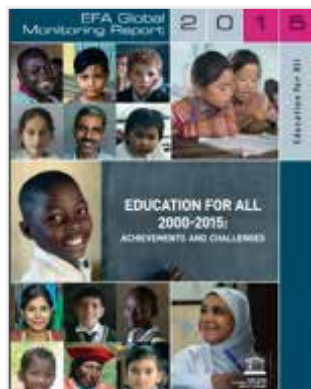
Participate

January	February	March	April	May	June
<p>6 - 22 Architectural Conservation and Management of Historic Religious Heritage</p>	<p>7 - 11 Workshop to develop teacher guides for grades 5 & 6</p> <p>14 - 18 Meeting to work on the development of the National Framework for Assessments and Examinations</p> <p>21 - 26 Training Science and Mathematics Supervisors on Designing Teacher Training Packages for grades 10 - 12</p>	<p>8 International Women's Day</p> <p>20 - 24 Developing Teacher Training Packages for Grades 7 - 9</p> <p>22 World Water Day</p>	<p>6 International Day of Sport for Development and Peace</p> <p>23 World Book and Copyright Day</p> <p>25 - 27 Quality Assurance Conference</p> <p>30 International Jazz Day</p>	<p>3 World Press Freedom Day</p> <p>3 - 7 Training MoHESR managers on Quality Assurance Framework and Policy Development</p> <p>21 World Day for Cultural Diversity for dialogue and Development</p>	<p>5 World Environment Day</p> <p>8 World Oceans Day</p> <p>17 World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought</p>

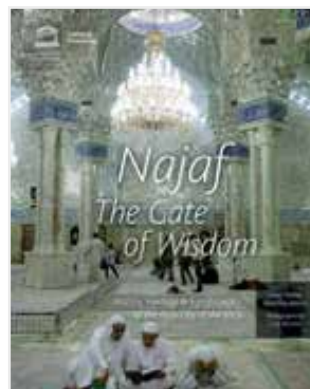
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