

IRAQ

Education

Sectoral and OR+ (Thematic) Report January to December 2018



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Prepared by UNICEF Iraq
March 2019

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On Cover: “There is no life without school” says 13-year-old Farah (left). She and her neighbour Ali, 11 years old, live in West Mosul, Ninewa.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AOG	Armed Opposition Groups
CCC	Core Commitments for Children
CFS	Child Friendly Space
CPAP	Country Programme Action Plan
CPWG	Child Protection Working Groups
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CT	Cash Transfer
C4D	Communication for Development
DIB	Disputed Internal Borders
DoE	Directorate of Education
DoLSA	Directorate of Labour and Social Affairs
EiE	Education in Emergencies
EMIS	Education Management Information System
GoI	Government of Iraq
HAC	Humanitarian Action for Children
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IM	Information Management
KRI	Kurdistan Region of Iraq
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government
KRSO	Kurdistan Region Statistics Office
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoH	Ministry of Health
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NLG	No Lost Generation
NPD	National Development Plan
OOSC	Out of School Children
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
PSS	Psychosocial Support Services
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
SBM	School Based Management
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SMC	School Management Committee
ToT	Training of Trainers
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
WASH	Water, Sanitation, Hygiene
WHO	World Health Organization
YFS	Youth-Friendly Space
3RP	Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (Syrian refugee response)

Executive Summary

UNICEF's Education Programme in Iraq is guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and other related international conventions such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). UNICEF's Core Commitments for Children (CCC) also provide a guiding framework for the programme.

At country level, UNICEF's 2016-2019 programme is being implemented in line with the UNICEF Global Strategic Plan 2018 to 2021, and in support of the Government of Iraq (GoI) at national, regional and subnational levels to strengthen basic social services to reach the most vulnerable children and women, especially those affected by conflict and displacement, in support of the Iraq National Development Plan (NDP) 2018 to 2022, the National Education Strategy 2011 to 2020, the Iraq Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) and the Kurdistan Regional Government's 'Vision 2020'.

UNICEF Iraq in partnership and collaboration with the Government of Iraq (GoI) and its donors are implementing a variety of interventions in support of children in Iraq. Key progress is outlined below.

- **System strengthening:** UNICEF successfully advocated for the expansion of the Education Management Information System (EMIS) pilot to eight governorates with 4,000 schools. The strengthening of the EMIS contributed to improved data collection and management of education statistics. With technical assistance from Cambridge Education, UNICEF has rolled out plans to build the capacity of Directorates of Education at Governorate level to develop decentralized education sector improvement plans. Work to establish a national learning assessment system commence with the federal and Kurdistan Ministries of Education (MoE).
- **Improvements in access:** More than 1.2 million (46 per cent girls) out of school children (OOSC) and those at risk of dropping out were supported to access education. This was made possible through providing extra learning spaces, mobilising out-of-school children to enrol in formal and non-formal education (NFE), providing educational supplies and ensuring continuous teacher availability.
- **Improvements in quality:** Expansion of the School-Based Management (SBM) approach improved learning environments in 374 schools in Iraq in 2018, benefitting 290,279 children. Teachers and Parent Teacher Association (PTA) members acquired skills in planning, budgeting and reporting, and can formulate and implement school improvement plans setting priorities to enable them to deliver quality education. Furthermore, implementation of Life Skills and Citizenship Education (LSCE) expanded especially in retaken governorates of Anbar, Kirkuk, and Ninewa where more teachers were trained on psychosocial support (PSS) and children participated in extracurricular activities and community outreaches to strengthen social cohesion. In the KRI, the MoE completed integration of life skills within the basic education curriculum.

The combined effects of a prolonged refugee crisis since 2012 and a large-scale internal displacement crisis since 2014 continues to place enormous pressure on government and education actors, including UNICEF, to deliver coordinated and sustainable education responses for conflict- and displacement-affected children, around half of whom are children under 18 years old.

Despite reduction in armed violence in 2018, and signs of increasing stability and security, UNICEF maintained its cluster (Iraq internal displacement response) and sector (Syrian refugee response) coordination roles. In Iraq, UNICEF co-leads the Education cluster with Save the Children International.

UNICEF continued to provide dedicated human resource capacity for IDP cluster and Syrian refugee sector response including national and sub-national coordination staff for Education, WASH, and Child Protection responses, as well as full-time dedicated cluster information management staff.

Flexible thematic funding provided core support for the people who needed it most. UNICEF National Committees and public sector donors played an essential role in securing high quality thematic funding for children in Iraq, and UNICEF Iraq acknowledges the critical nature of these flexible contributions which included US\$ 2,666,049 from the Government of Denmark.

Flexible funding allowed UNICEF to act as a more reliable partner for government and non-government counterparts. With its multi-year timeframe, thematic funding contributed to sustain and strengthen resilience-based interventions. UNICEF would like to thank all donors who contributed to the achievements outlined in this report, with a special mention to the Government of Denmark for its continued flexible thematic funding support. We look forward to continued collaboration in 2019 to achieve more results for the women and children of Iraq.

Strategic Context 2018

2018 was the third year, of four, in the implementation of the UNICEF Iraq Country Programme 2016 to 2019, which is being implemented in line with the UNICEF Core Commitments for Children, UNICEF Strategic Plan 2018 to 2021, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2016 to 2030. UNICEF through its Education Programme worked towards **children of basic and post-basic school age, especially girls, having increased and more equitable access to quality learning in a progressively strengthened education system, including in humanitarian situations.**

In 2018, Iraq took tentative steps towards stabilization. Notably, reduction in armed violence and decrease in mass population movements have been positive signs of increasing peace and security. Despite this Iraq continues to face challenges, many of them exacerbated by the most recent round of conflict, that are likely to continue for the foreseeable future.

Since the end of the conflict against the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in late 2017, reported violence has fallen to its lowest level since 2003. However, the previous lull in violence between 2009 and 2013 serves as a warning against complacency (Economist Intelligence Unit [EIU]), and certain areas of Iraq continued to see violence and insecurity in 2018, including Anbar, Kirkuk, and Ninewa (centre and north). Around a quarter of the population, including four million children, remained in need of at least one form of humanitarian assistance (Iraq 2018 Humanitarian Response Plan). Further, the population of Iraq is overwhelmingly young - nearly 50 per cent are under 20 years old. After 15 years of cycles of conflict, no child in Iraq has memories of a time of peace, and the years since 2014 have witnessed displacement of nearly six million Iraqis, around 15 per cent of the country's population, including three million children under 18 (International Organization for Migration [IOM], Iraq Displacement Crisis Report 2014-2017).

Patterns of population movement were complex in the year. People remained in displacement, chose to return, were newly-displaced due to pockets of continued insecurity, or chose to re-displace ('secondary' displacement) to IDP camps or previous displacement locations. As of December 2018, over 1.8 million Iraqis, over 900,000 children, remained internally displaced. Key issues hindering return, as reported by displaced families, include problems with housing, earning a living, accessing basic services, social cohesion, security, and mental health. Two-thirds (64 per cent) of the remaining 1.8 million displaced report no intention to return in the coming 12 months (IOM DTM, Reasons to Remain, November 2018) and smaller-scale 'secondary' displacements and new arrivals to IDP camps continued throughout the year. Movements also continued between Iraq and Syria and Iraq remains

host to more than 250,000 Syrian refugees, around half of them children (Interagency Information Portal, UNHCR). For those choosing to return, many are re-entering areas that were sites of recent armed violence.

External and internal tensions across political, economic, and social spheres presented a volatile dynamic that continues to expose children to the risk of violence, abuse, neglect, and which reduces consistent access to their rights. Politically, Iraq remains vulnerable to external pressures, and relationships with neighbouring states are complex. Internally, tensions continued between a range of political actors and parties, and between citizens and the state. The side-effects of the September 2017 KRI referendum on independence were felt into early 2018, with the KRI borders closed to international traffic until late March 2018. In October 2018, new customs checkpoints were announced, requiring additional permissions to be sought and fees paid, for goods, including UNICEF supplies moving between the KRG and federal Iraq. After national elections in May 2018, government formation continued into December 2018, at which time eight out of 22 ministries had not yet been filled (EIU, Landscape Report), including positions such as interior and defence ministers. Without key interlocutors at Ministry level, including at the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Justice, and Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, planned policy and legislative interventions in support of children slowed in 2018, including implementation and monitoring of the National Child Protection Policy (NCPP) and progress towards a new Child Rights Law.

For UNICEF and partners, continuation of humanitarian assistance for the most vulnerable children has remained a central concern in 2018. In parallel, there has been increasing need to ensure that national systems are strengthened to re-build physical and social infrastructures to hasten improvements against key development indicators, while remaining sensitive to the many tensions that still exist. Iraq remains a complex operational context, and state systems and facilities continue to face the challenges created by prolonged conflict and fragility. UNICEF programming continued to support the humanitarian-development nexus, maintaining strong relationships with government partners at federal, regional, and local levels. Work was undertaken to strengthen institutional capacities across UNICEF programme areas, including in educational planning through the devolved 'School Based Management' approach, and in the juvenile justice sector, among others.

Education challenges have persisted over time, including poor completion and transition rates of children in education, especially girls. In 2018, rates of out of school children continue to be highest at secondary level – only 8 per cent of children were found as out of school at primary levels, rising up to 40 per cent by upper secondary level (MICS-6), with significant geographic disparity in completion rates between the KRI (89 per cent completion) and central and southern Iraq (73 per cent), as well as between richest and poorest wealth quintiles (93 per cent against 54 per cent respectively).

While net primary school enrolment rate is 91.6 per cent, only 10 per cent of children attend pre-school before entering primary. Despite gender parity at primary level, more girls are out of school at primary (9.6 per cent) compared to boys (7.2 per cent). At lower secondary, 27.7 per cent girls are out of school compared to 14.7 per cent for boys. In upper secondary level, 46.1 per cent girls are out of school compared to 34.8 per cent for boys (MICS 2018). In 2018, it was estimated that 3.3 million school-aged Iraqi children affected by conflict were in need of education support.¹

Children in richest households have better access to basic social services compared to children in poorest households. Primary education and lower secondary completion rates are positively correlated with wealth quintiles. Children in poorest quintiles have 38.5 per cent and 49.6 per cent less completion rates in primary and lower secondary schools than children in richest quintiles respectively (MICS 2018).

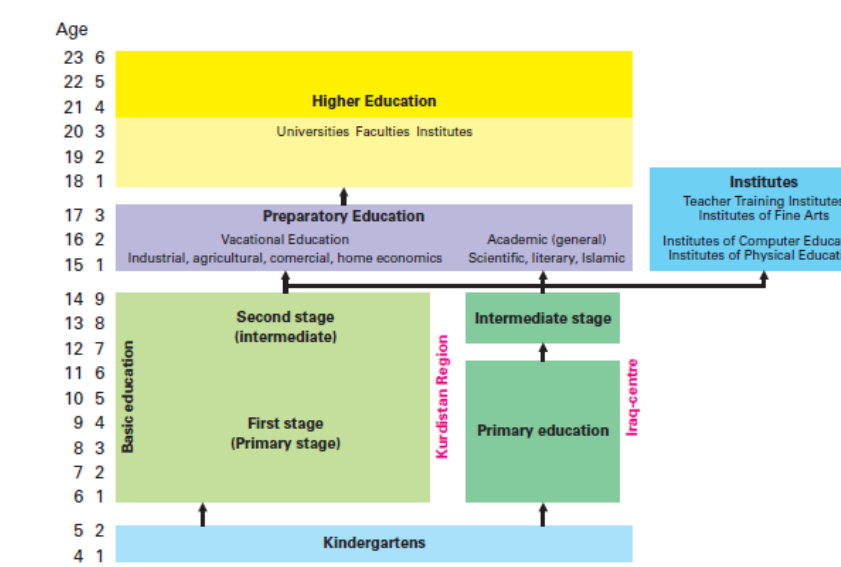
¹ United Nations, Iraq Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), 2018

The education sector accounts for only 9.62 per cent of the overall 2019 budget and over 90 per cent of that budget goes on salaries. Insufficient provision of, and long distances to, schools affect children's participation especially in rural and poorer regions. There is a gap of over 7,000 school buildings to meet the population of school-age children (MoE), and in 2017 alone it was estimated that more than 150 schools were damaged or destroyed.² More than half of schools need rehabilitation and lack adequate WASH facilities. Shortage of premises has resulted in multiple-shift schooling which negatively impacts on quality of learning.

Even when recognized by the national authorities, alternative education programmes and non-formal learning opportunities often lack premises, facilities, and teaching personnel. Direct and indirect costs, opportunity costs (linked to child labour and/or participation in household chores), poor quality of learning environment, cultural beliefs and social norms, and child marriage affect participation in schooling.

Prolonged years of conflict have negatively affected the quality of education and learning outcomes. 52 per cent³ of children aged 14 years old could not read at second grade level. Many children, particularly in humanitarian situations, suffer from trauma of violence, displacement and loss and need psychosocial support.

Figure 1 : Structure of the education system in Iraq⁴



UNICEF in Iraq remains strongly positioned to provide required support to the Government of Iraq and to education partners, including technical capacity building, financial support to systems-building interventions both at policy level and at the level of the governorate directorates who play a significant role in identifying and responding to children's educational needs. Since the start of the Country Programme in Iraq in 2016, UNICEF support to the Ministry of Education (MoE) has yielded substantial results in its three main areas, as follows:

- **Strengthened decentralized capacity among national actors to plan and deliver education responses:** A significant strategic approach in 2018 was to strengthen planning capacity at governorate level within the framework of decentralised governance. The need for local-level capacity to respond to emerging need and changes in context has been highlighted through Iraq's most recent years of conflict and instability, especially in Iraq's diverse

² Ibid.

³ Annual Status of Education Report assessment conducted by partners on the literacy and numeracy skills

⁴ As referenced in UNICEF 2017, The Cost and Benefits of Education in Iraq: An analysis of the education sector and strategies to maximize the benefits of education. Iraq Country Office

operational environment. Conflict has stretched national capacity of national education structures and systems, and government staff's ability to plan, implement, monitor, report, and coordinate. The school-based management (SBM) model of service delivery aims to support decentralised planning at governorate level, enhancing accountability to deliver results for children. In 2018, a decentralised sector planning process started; UNICEF plans that 11 governorates (out of a total 18 in Iraq) will have sector plans by the end of 2019. The ultimate impact will be enhanced education service delivery and improvements in educational outcomes in the country.

- **Initiation of efforts to measure learning achievements in Iraq:** The absence of a credible system to assess learning achievement has made it challenging for Government to show that children are learning what they need to know. Previous attempts by MOE in Iraq and KRG to participate global assessment frameworks - such as Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) - failed due to lack of a national student assessment system. UNICEF is providing technical and financial support to a Monitoring Learning Achievement (MLA) intervention which intends to enable Iraq's education authorities to measure learning outcomes and compare its education system with other systems globally. The MLA system is expected to be functional by end-2019.

Several factors continue to challenge attainment of learning outcomes, including inadequate pupil/teacher contact times, inequitable distribution of qualified teachers, low teacher morale and poorly-coordinated professional development opportunities. Other challenges relate to low government spending on infrastructure, multiple school shift system, and unaligned curricula.

At the close of 2018, the key discussions revolved around ways in which to support and strengthen the country's national systems, including decentralization of authorities and capacity to governorate-levels, and considering the prolonged cycles of conflict and violence that have weakened human and system capacity over many years.

Figure 1: UNICEF Iraq programme focus areas 2016-2019

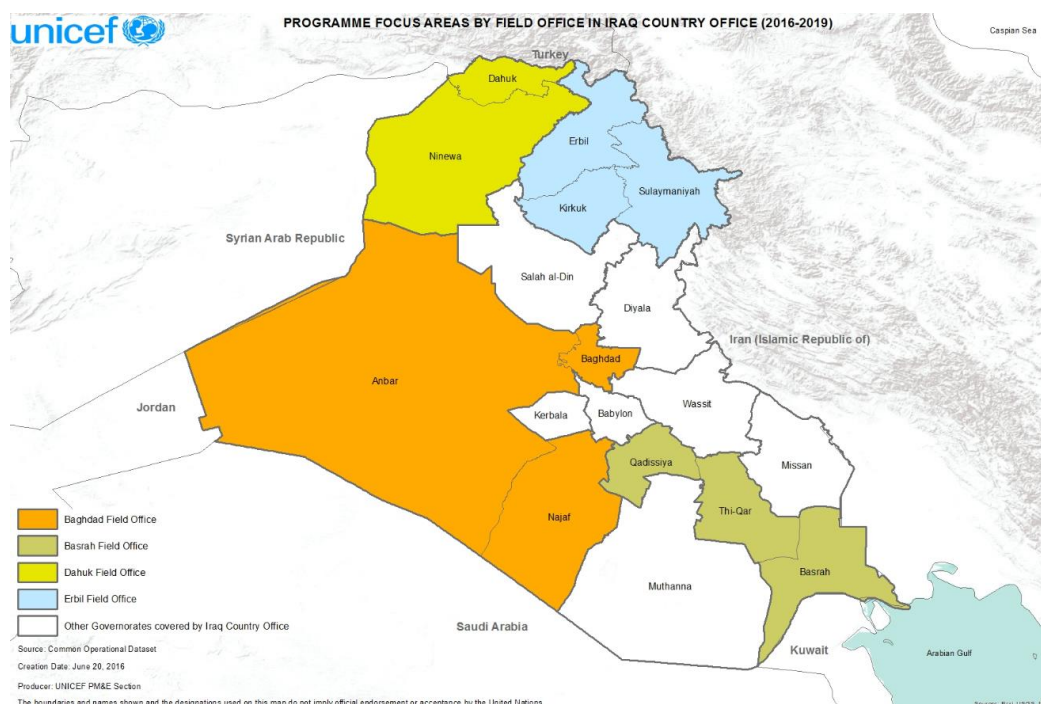
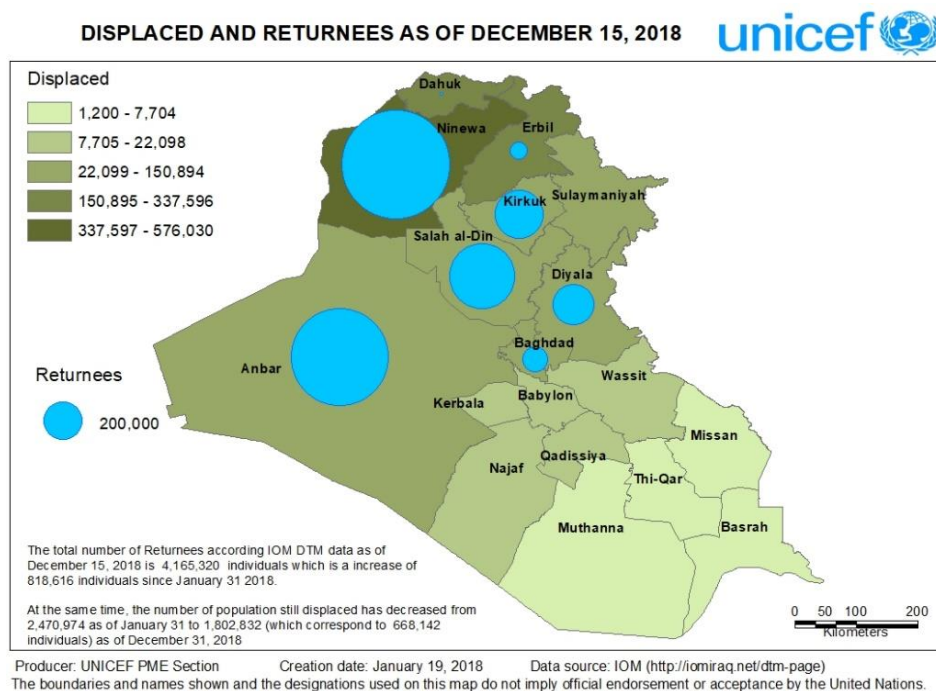


Figure 2: Population of internally displaced people (IDPs) as of December 2018



Results in the Outcome Area

Education

This section details the results achieved, strategies used, and the challenges addressed during 2018 towards realising the commitments for Education. Flexible thematic funds from the Government of Denmark were instrumental to complement comprehensive achievement of strategic results in education including increasing equitable access to education for some of the most vulnerable children in Iraq. In 2018, UNICEF continued its focus on access, quality, and systems strengthening for which the flexible funds from Denmark were crucial. Thematic funding also aided the overall achievement of the education programme through staff salary support and other cross sectoral costs which have been valuable in delivering overall results for children.

Iraq Outcome 3: By 2019, children of basic and post-basic school age, especially girls, have increased and more equitable access to quality learning in a progressively strengthened education system, including in humanitarian situations.

In 2018, UNICEF continued to support to the Government of Iraq Ministry of Education (MoE) to ensure that children affected by conflict, especially IDPs and refugees, continued to access education, through rehabilitation of schools, provision of learning spaces using prefabricated classrooms, provision of teaching and learning supplies as well as providing teacher incentives and teacher training on pedagogical skills. More than 990,838 children benefited from these interventions including 30,947 Syrian refugees and 269,486 out-of-school children in marginalised communities to access non-formal

education interventions. Furthermore, UNICEF supported 2,713 girls in disadvantaged communities in southern governorates of Iraq to transition from primary to secondary learning.

After support provided in 2017 to develop policy and guidelines for a School Based Management (SBM) approach, in 2018 UNICEF and the MoE, continued to scale up the coverage of schools implementing the School Based Management (SBM) approach. Since the start of the Country Programme in 2016, there are now 1,046 schools in total participating (87 per cent of the planned target of 1,200 under the 2016 to 2019 Country Programme), of which 374 additional schools joined the roll-out in 2018, for an additional 290,279 children now learning in SBM-participating schools.

Parents and Teacher Associations (PTA), School Management Committees (SMC), school principals, teachers, and education supervisors benefited from training on the SBM approach and were oriented on the devolved authorities that empower them to take decisions in their schools. The effectiveness of the SBM approach compelled an additional 240 schools to adopt the approach and to mobilise local resources to improve their schools. A sign of the high level of ownership and buy-in for the approach at Ministry level was a Directive issued by the MoE to all Directorates of Education (DoE) to integrate SBM in their planning and to implement the model at governorate level.

UNICEF worked to improve the psychological wellbeing of teachers and children through PSS training for 125 master trainers who work largely in the 'retaken' governorates of Anbar, Kirkuk, and Ninewa. The training allowed the teachers to identify psychosocial support needs, and support psychosocial wellbeing of children, including through awareness of referral to child protection actors and more specialised services. UNICEF supported the implementation of life skills activities to enhance social cohesion; over 327,357 children benefited from these interventions. Furthermore, UNICEF continued to engage the MoE to integrate Life Skills Education into the education curriculum and positive developments were registered with KRG adopting the strategy and developing curriculum for children between six and 15 years old, as well as teacher guides and textbooks.

In 2018, UNICEF continued systems-strengthening interventions. With the goal to strengthen the collection and management of education sector data, UNICEF, UNESCO, and the federal and KRG Ministries of Education developed a rollout plan for the strengthening of the Education Management Information Systems (EMIS). This system will allow for the collection of real time and quality data which will be used for decision making, planning and budgetary allocation in addition to monitoring quality of education services. To strengthen monitoring of learning outcomes, UNICEF supported a scoping mission for establishment of a national learning assessment system. The outcome was a detailed analysis of the context in Iraq and the steps needed. Work will continue into 2019.

UNICEF, in collaboration with the World Bank, rolled out plans for decentralized governorate level education sector plans in 11 governorates. The process involves building capacity of governorate-level education authorities to conduct comprehensive sector assessments and to use the outcomes to develop prioritised, costed three-to-five-year plans. This process will build capacities of DoE but also facilitate effective allocation of resources to improve education outcomes at governorate level. Cambridge Education is providing technical assistance in this process.

Building on a 2017 concept note on non-formal Education (NFE), in 2018 UNICEF supported the KRG MoE to rollout processes related to establishing a non-Formal Education (NFE) policy, aiming to support education for children who are out of school or who have missed years of schooling. The policy will provide clear guidelines for linking NFE to the formal education system.

In terms of evidence generation, developed ICO Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (IMEP) comprising of 19 evidence generation and research activities. A total of 19 IMEP activities were approved by the Evaluation, Research and Advisory Committee (ERAC) for 2018-2019. A major study

is the successful completion of the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS-6) 2018 (sixth global round). Preparations began in 2017, data collection was completed in the first half of 2018, and by the end of the year statistical snapshots and development of draft Survey Findings Report (SFR), which offers updated information on the situation of children and women in Iraq, including on education-related topics.

Of the Education outcome indicators per the Iraq Country Programme, measurements of enrolment and completion rates, out of school children, and others has been challenging in recent years of large-scale humanitarian emergency, with mass internal displacement. Based on the 2018 MICS, there has been a slight increase in primary enrolment – from 91 per cent primary enrolment in 2011 to 91.6 per cent in 2018 - but a significant drop in enrolment at secondary level, from 74 per cent in 2011 to 57.5 per cent in 2018. Also according to the MICS, rates of out of school children appear to have remained relatively static at primary level – 8.4 per cent in 2011 versus 8.3 per cent in 2018 – while at lower secondary level, it appears the rate of OOSC reduced from 25.9 per cent to 21.2 per cent. The MoE, UNICEF, and UNESCO continued to work jointly to establish the EMIS, and anticipate that, once functional within the coming year or so, this system will greatly contribute to the regular, accurate, and timely production and analysis of various areas of Education data supporting better knowledge of enrolment, transition rates, and attendance.

Overall, the four output⁵ areas under the UNICEF Iraq Education Programme Outcome Area, X are considered to be on track as of December 2018.

Output 3.1: Ministry of Education at central and decentralized levels has strengthened capacities for policy development, coordination, planning, budgeting and monitoring, including in humanitarian situation

UNICEF provided financial and technical resources to the MoE to enhance its capacity to deliver equitable quality education. Efforts continued to migrate the national EMIS from a paper-based system to a computer-based platform that would provide more easily accessible, timely, and reliable information for planning, decision-making, budgeting and reporting. Based on the successful pilots in Baghdad governorate (Rasafa-3) and KRI, UNICEF worked in partnership with the MoE, the World Bank, UNESCO and the EU to develop a project to expand the EMIS to 10 governorates⁶. Implementation will commence in 2019. UNICEF also provided financial resources to expand the 'e-Perwerde' EMIS (locally-developed information management solution in the KRI) to 107 more schools in KRI, bringing total coverage to 362 (out of 622 planned schools). The success of the pilot motivated the KRI Council of Ministers to finance a roll-out of the e-Perwerde to 4,000 schools out of 5,742 schools in KRI. Once the national EMIS is established, the two systems will be designed so that data can be easily shared and used between them.

The establishment of a system to measure learning achievement (MLA) was rolled out following a scoping mission at the start of 2018. UNICEF contracted Cambridge Education to support the MoE to set up the MLA system and build government capacity to manage it. The work will be completed in September 2019 and will give the MOE sustainable capability to assess learning outcomes.

The absence of costed education sector plans meant decisions on education resources, allocation, and actions could not always be made on solid evidential bases. UNICEF has continued to advocate for decentralized planning to respond to the unique needs of each governorate, while offering scope for bottom-up sector planning in line with Government decentralization efforts nationwide. The MoE

⁵ At the end of 2017, UNICEF Iraq reduced from five to four outputs in the Country Programme, working to integrate humanitarian and resilience-focused interventions as part of the nexus. More detail on UNICEF's support to children in humanitarian situations is available here: www.unicef.org/appeals/iraq

⁶ Anbar, Baghdad, Basrah, Diyala, Kirkuk, Ninewa, Qadissiya, Salah al Din, and Thi Qar.

endorsed the model and in July UNICEF organised an orientation workshop for Governorate Directors General of Education and Planning. The Prime Minister's Advisory Committee (PMAC) participated in this process and emphasised government committee to decentralized planning. Cambridge Education will support the process.

Law 19 of 2013 identified the MoE as one of the eight ministries to pilot decentralized service delivery. However, efforts to implement decentralization in education were challenged by tensions between political and technical authorities regarding decision making and management of human and financial resources. In 2018 UNICEF contracted an international consultant to conduct a bottleneck analysis of the decentralization process in education. Work commenced in and the outcome of the diagnostic study will inform the development of governorate sector plans and implementation of SBM approaches.

UNICEF continued to support coordination of education service delivery in humanitarian settings. With the improving security situation, UNICEF has initiated the development of an exit strategy from cluster coordination to the formation of a national sector working group. Additionally, UNICEF and MoE systematized the high-level coordination committee to monitor the education programme, review progress and determine course correction as needed.

Output 3.2: School-based management (SBM), action and monitoring is mainstreamed and operationalized in selected governorates

In line with the commitment to support the Government of Iraq to achieve SDG 4 (Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all), UNICEF provided technical and financial resources to the MoE and its Directorates to strengthen decentralised coordination, planning, budgeting and monitoring. Specifically, UNICEF supported the MoE to review the policy on decentralisation and issue a directive which granted decision making authorities to schools and communities through the School Based Management (SBM) model.

The enabling policy framework facilitated achievement of remarkable results for children in schools implementing SBM. School staff and community members in 374 schools worked collaboratively to develop and implement school improvement plans (SIP), which had clear goals and objectives for allocation of human and financial resources to address priority issues. A total of 290,279 children (118,273 girls) benefitted from improved learning environments in the 374 schools implementing SBM interventions in 2018.

Out of the 374 schools, 123 are boys-only schools, 92 are girls-only schools while 159 schools are of mixed gender. This accounts for the higher number of boys reached so far. Training and capacity building for 2,130 teachers and 1,699 PTA representatives resulted in more empowered and functional school management committees that competently exercised devolved financial and administrative authorities in their respective schools. The committees took charge of day-to-day decisions and effectively managed per capita 'block grants' disbursed to schools to implement the SIP. The success of the SBM model in the 374 focus schools galvanised demand from 240 additional schools (144 in Iraq and 96 in Kurdistan Region), which mobilised their own resources and only requested technical capacity-building support. The SIP have functioned as a 'blueprint' for development of governorate education sector improvement plans.

UNICEF's Education and Communication for Development (C4D) teams worked with government education authorities to develop a community mobilization package for PTAs to raise awareness on the potential of SBM to positively influence community participation in decision making at school level and contribute to children's learning outcomes. Furthermore, to enhance the implementation of the SBM model, UNICEF worked with the MOE SBM committee to review and update the SBM training manual. An international consultant was recruited to document key lessons, opportunities, best practices, and challenges of SBM, and to recommend actions to scale up the exercise of financial and administrative authorities by SMC and PTA.

Output 3.3: Increased access of children including those out-of-school, to basic and post-basic education opportunities in selected governorates, and in humanitarian situations.

UNICEF worked in partnership with central and governorate-level education authorities, civil society partners, and communities to increase access to quality basic education. Key interventions included provision of additional learning spaces and educational supplies, enrolment of out-of-school children (OOSC) into formal and non-formal education, transportation of refugee students to schools and paying incentives to volunteer teachers in camps and return areas. A total of 1.3 million OOSC and children (583,774 girls) in humanitarian situations accessed education with the direct support of UNICEF. This included 30,947 Syrian refugees (15,398 girls) living in camps and non-camp settings in the KRI.

Camp closures and accelerated return process resulted in significant gaps. There were shortages of classrooms and furniture, which caused an increase in the 'shift' approach that means different schools share school buildings during the week (e.g., morning/afternoon, or a division of days). Shift schooling negatively impacts on learning outcomes, as it reduces teacher-pupil contact time, and leaves children out of school for part of the week. As part of efforts to increase the number of usable learning spaces, UNICEF rehabilitated 786 schools across five governorates⁷ Ninewa, Anbar, Erbil, Kirkuk and Dohuk, installed 640 prefab classrooms in 222 schools, procured and distributed 44,959 two-seater student desks to schools; and repaired 24,395 damaged desks for schools in host communities and return areas. UNICEF distributed warm clothing to 52,800 children in Dohuk, Ninewa and Erbil governorates during the winter season.

The decision of Ministry of Displacement and Migration to close or consolidate IDP camps caused a shortage of teachers in residual camps and return areas. Moreover, the MoE had indicated inability to cater for refugee teachers' salaries, while NGO support for incentives was constrained by funding shortfalls. The situation was compounded by high attrition of teachers from teaching service due to delays in salary payments. To ensure uninterrupted delivery of education services in camp schools UNICEF provided monthly incentives for 1,204 refugee and IDP teachers (831 female) and 138 support staff (including administrators, guards, and cleaners) in Dahuk, Erbil, and Sulaymaniyah. UNICEF also advocated with government at central level for a more rational system to ensure equitable coverage of teachers. In Baghdad, the advocacy led to reallocation of teachers to schools that had high teacher-to-student ratios.

In Ninewa, 16,590 children could not access education because they had lost their documentation while under the occupation of ISIS. Schools could not admit them due to a standing MOE policy. UNICEF led the efforts of the education cluster to advocate with MOE for the affected children to be allowed to register. In November MOE issued a directive to all DOEs allowing children without documentation to enrol during the new academic year. UNICEF provided the affected children with scholastic materials. Additionally, UNICEF supported 16,552 OOSC in Hawija district, Kirkuk governorate to access non-formal learning opportunities in preparation for their reintegration into formal education.

Output 3.4: Life skills education is mainstreamed in the teaching and learning system and operationalized in nine governorates

In 2018, UNICEF achieved a breakthrough for the inclusion of the Life Skills curriculum into mainstream learning. Both federal and KRG Ministries participated in the consultation and preparation meetings of the Life Skills and Citizenship Education Regional Initiative and both Ministries contributed in the development of the Conceptual Programmatic Framework which includes timeframes, areas of intervention, system approach and joint programme cooperation with other line ministries and

⁷ Anbar, Dahuk, Erbil, Kirkuk, and Ninewa

stakeholders. Following this, both Ministries adopted the approach and developed plans to integrate in local curriculum.

The KRG Ministry developed a detailed workplan on integrating life skills education through curriculum review supported by a series of community mobilization activities. The MoE sought UNICEF's technical guidance to advance life skills integration within basic education. The outcome was materials were developed and approved for each grade for children aged between 6 and 15 years.

At federal level the MoE expanded capacity through training of 125 master trainers in five-day intensive psychosocial support (PSS) workshops in the re-taken governorates of Anbar, Kirkuk, and Ninewa. This approach was agreed between UNICEF and the MoE following development of two PSS training manuals. The master trainers delivered sessions at the governorate levels in coordination with the governorate-level education authorities.

In response to feedback from communities, and evidence from reports by the MoE and UNICEF concerning violence against children in schools, UNICEF and the federal and regional authorities agreed to renew efforts to implement the 'Positive Discipline' approach to address violence against children. In February 2018, the MoEs developed and adopted a detailed strategy with clear parameters and action plans for implementation.

At governorate level, and in coordination with the respective government and non-government education partners, social outreach and non-classroom activities were conducted at school and community levels. Social activities for children included sports festivals, play and drama sessions, drawings and music festivals, bringing children from diverse backgrounds together including from the Romani community, displaced in camps, in host communities, and refugees. Activities aimed to enhance social and peaceful co-existence and disseminating messages of respect for diversity, volunteerism, and cooperation. These events also served as avenues to mobilise children to enrol in school and share information with parents on the importance of learning for children. By December 2018, 670 schools had implemented life skills activities in six governorates.⁸

Furthermore, UNICEF led development of Life Skills 'awareness packages' designed in accordance with key skills identified as needed and appropriate in Iraq's context. The packages have been used by UNICEF as part of social outreach activities for the 2018-19 academic year.

Output 3.5: Education in Emergencies

At the end of 2017, UNICEF agreed that the fifth output in the Country Programme, which was created specifically in relation to Education in Emergencies, would be considered as closed for the remaining two years of the Programme (2018 and 2019) and that, in order to support the humanitarian-development nexus and a focus on systems-building and systems-strengthening, actions relating to education for children in humanitarian situations would instead be integrated into, and considered part of, the four other outputs.

The Education cluster has been active since 2015, and has continued to fulfil its functions, also throughout 2018, and is anticipated to continue into 2019. UNICEF provided dedicated human resource support in the form of national and sub-national coordination staff, as well as one full-time national information management officer.

⁸ Baghdad, Basrah, Najaf, Ninewa, Qadissiya and Thi Qar.

Financial Analysis

The planned budget in Iraq in 2018 for the Education Outcome Area from UNICEF's Regular Resources (RR) and Other Resources (Regular and Emergency) was US\$ 10.9 million as shown in the table below.

Table 1: Planned Budget for Education (in US dollars)

Intermediate Results	Funding Type ⁹	Planned Budget
GOVERNMENT CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT	RR	212,000.00
	ORR	-
	ORE	-
SCHOOL BASED MANAGEMENT	RR	-
	ORR	1,881,500.00
	ORE	1,667,380.00
OUT OF SCHOOL CHILDREN	RR	-
	ORR	2,503,571.04
	ORE	2,390,107.22
LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION	RR	-
	ORR	1,379,041.24
	ORE	884,027.49
Sub-total Regular Resources		212,000.00
Sub-total Other Resources - Regular		5,764,112.27
Sub-total Other Resources - Emergency		4,941,514.72
Total for 2018		10,917,626.99

The Government of Denmark provided US\$ 2,666,049, making a significant commitment to supporting UNICEF Iraq with country-specific thematic funding for education in 2018. The thematic funds from Denmark provided significant support to the far-reaching achievement of strategic results in strengthening systems that identify and support out of school children, among other actions. Thematic funding also aided the total progress possible under the Education programme in 2018 through critical resources to maintain UNICEF's technical capacity and expertise. The table below illustrates the country-specific education thematic funds received in 2018.

Table 2: Country-level Thematic Contributions Outcome Area 4 received in 2018

Donors	Grant Number	Contribution Amount	Programmable amount
GLOBAL - EDUCATION	SC189904	2,666,049.36	2,491,634.91
Total		2,666,049.36	2,491,634.91

Within the Education outcome area, the greatest expenditure in 2018 was related to supporting more equitable access to education, which accounted for around 68 per cent of total expenditure for the outcome, as shown in the table below.

Table 3: 2018 Expenditures in the Education thematic area (in US dollars)

Organizational Targets	Expenditure Amount			
	Other Resources - Emergency	Other Resources - Regular	Regular Resources	All Programme Accounts
Equitable access to quality education	9,410,265.76	4,906,404.02	10,085.00	14,326,754.78
Learning outcomes	2,990,780.24	2,319,935.55	-	5,310,715.79
Skills development	1,134,125.06	294,958.40	-	1,429,083.46
Total	13,535,171.06	7,521,297.97	10,085.00	21,066,554.03

⁹ RR: Regular Resources, ORR: Other Resources – Regular, ORE: Other Resources – Emergency.

Table 4: Thematic expenses by Results Area

The total expenditure for this Outcome area in 2018 was US\$21,066,554, as shown in the table below.

Output	Fund Sub-Category	Total
GOVERNMENT CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT	Other Resources - Emergency	2,203,695
	Other Resources - Regular	1,461,864
SCHOOL BASED MANAGEMENT	Other Resources - Emergency	1,914,795
	Other Resources - Regular	1,372,814
OUT OF SCHOOL CHILDREN	Other Resources - Emergency	8,187,726
	Other Resources - Regular	4,391,662
	Regular Resources	10,085
LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION	Other Resources - Emergency	1,129,162
	Other Resources - Regular	294,958
EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES ¹⁰	Other Resources - Emergency	99,793
	Regular Resources	
Grand Total		21,066,554.03

UNICEF also analyses expenditures using Specific Intervention Codes (SICs) that identify an activity in UNICEF's performance management system. In 2018, the following were the major expenses incurred in the education outcome area, analysed using the SICs.

Table 5: Expenses by Specific Intervention Codes (SIC)

Activity	Total
2130/A0/08/003/001/001 TECHNICAL SUPPORT	3,219,129.36
2130/A0/08/003/001/110 EDUCATION IN EMERGENCIES POLICY	11,516.19
2130/A0/08/003/001/120 DEVELOP NON-FORMAL EDUCATION POLICY	102,959.90
2130/A0/08/003/001/230 SYSTEM FOR MONITORING	110,678.27
2130/A0/08/003/001/240 LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION	2,830.36
2130/A0/08/003/001/312 GOVERNORATE CAPACITY BUILDING, EMIS IMPLEMENTATION	217,936.32
2130/A0/08/003/001/322 GOVERNORATE CAPACITY BUILDING, SECTOR IMPROVEMENT PLAN	508.51
2130/A0/08/003/002/001 TECHNICAL SUPPORT	1,415.51
2130/A0/08/003/002/110 CONSULTATION ON SBM APPROACH	24,352.56
2130/A0/08/003/002/111 CONSULTATION ON SBM APPROACH	22,774.93
2130/A0/08/003/002/113 CONSULTATION ON SBM APPROACH	8,263.18
2130/A0/08/003/002/114 CONSULTATION ON SBM APPROACH	1,757.87
2130/A0/08/003/002/121 PILOT SBM APPROACH	996,955.59
2130/A0/08/003/002/122 PILOT SBM APPROACH	157,065.06
2130/A0/08/003/002/123 PILOT SBM APPROACH	822,035.17
2130/A0/08/003/002/124 PILOT SBM APPROACH	493,675.21
2130/A0/08/003/002/210 TEACHER TRAINING	862.00
2130/A0/08/003/002/211 TEACHER TRAINING	121,141.66
2130/A0/08/003/002/212 TEACHER TRAINING	286,088.21
2130/A0/08/003/002/213 TEACHER TRAINING	55,965.39
2130/A0/08/003/002/214 TEACHER TRAINING	35,722.50
2130/A0/08/003/002/222 PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL SYSTEM	259,534.75
2130/A0/08/003/003/001 TECHNICAL SUPPORT	364,315.25
2130/A0/08/003/003/114 CASH TRANSFER	14,934.00
2130/A0/08/003/003/121 FACILITATE TRANSPORTATION	2,676.14
2130/A0/08/003/003/122 FACILITATE TRANSPORTATION	110,419.74
2130/A0/08/003/003/123 FACILITATE TRANSPORTATION	900.00
2130/A0/08/003/003/211 COMMUNITY MOBILISATION & C4D	42,581.39
2130/A0/08/003/003/212 COMMUNITY MOBILISATION & C4D	8,856.60
2130/A0/08/003/003/213 COMMUNITY MOBILISATION & C4D	600.00
2130/A0/08/003/003/214 COMMUNITY MOBILISATION & C4D	22,556.52
2130/A0/08/003/003/221 ACCESS TO LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES	445,872.59

¹⁰ Across the Iraq Country Programme Output 5 was closed across all programmes as of the end of 2017. The expenditures under this category are the result of outstanding commitments from 2017, paid in 2018.

2130/A0/08/003/003/222 ACCESS TO LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES	2,049,909.39
2130/A0/08/003/003/224 ACCESS TO LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES	120,063.63
2130/A0/08/003/003/231 SMCS / PTAS	-
2130/A0/08/003/003/233 SMCS / PTAS	-
2130/A0/08/003/003/234 SMCS / PTAS	-
2130/A0/08/003/003/251 NON-FORMAL EDUCATION	3,810.00
2130/A0/08/003/003/252 NON-FORMAL EDUCATION	321,303.90
2130/A0/08/003/003/253 NON-FORMAL EDUCATION	220,313.32
2130/A0/08/003/003/254 NON-FORMAL EDUCATION	21,217.48
2130/A0/08/003/003/255 ACCESS TO LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES	2,209,157.74
2130/A0/08/003/003/311 EDUCATION SERVICES TO OOS IDP	1,849,537.03
2130/A0/08/003/003/312 EDUCATION SERVICES TO OOS IDP	343,873.32
2130/A0/08/003/003/314 EDUCATION SERVICES TO OOS IDP	331,657.90
2130/A0/08/003/003/321 CONTINUITY OF EDUCATION IDP	601,360.10
2130/A0/08/003/003/322 CONTINUITY OF EDUCATION IDP	88,917.75
2130/A0/08/003/003/323 CONTINUITY OF EDUCATION IDP	47,736.75
2130/A0/08/003/003/331 CAPACITY BUILDING TEACHERS IDP	75,016.75
2130/A0/08/003/003/332 CAPACITY BUILDING TEACHERS IDP	196,225.00
2130/A0/08/003/003/342 QUALITY IN SCHOOLS FOR IDP	371,711.30
2130/A0/08/003/003/411 EDUCATION SERVICES TO OOS REFUGEES	429,407.94
2130/A0/08/003/003/412 EDUCATION SERVICES TO OOS REFUGEES	519,236.10
2130/A0/08/003/003/421 CONTINUITY OF EDUCATION REFUGEES	453,035.00
2130/A0/08/003/003/422 CONTINUITY OF EDUCATION REFUGEES	524,838.80
2130/A0/08/003/003/431 CAPACITY BUILDING TEACHERS REFUGEES	412,345.75
2130/A0/08/003/003/432 CAPACITY BUILDING TEACHERS REFUGEES	319,407.02
2130/A0/08/003/003/442 QUALITY IN SCHOOLS FOR REFUGEES	65,678.02
2130/A0/08/003/004/110 LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION	77,001.40
2130/A0/08/003/004/111 LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION	35,342.20
2130/A0/08/003/004/112 LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION	61,610.00
2130/A0/08/003/004/113 LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION	283,321.16
2130/A0/08/003/004/114 LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION	80,230.53
2130/A0/08/003/004/120 IMPLEMENT LIFE SKILLS	34,080.18
2130/A0/08/003/004/121 IMPLEMENT LIFE SKILLS	117,358.60
2130/A0/08/003/004/122 IMPLEMENT LIFE SKILLS	283,985.71
2130/A0/08/003/004/123 IMPLEMENT LIFE SKILLS	80,085.48
2130/A0/08/003/004/124 IMPLEMENT LIFE SKILLS	35,574.14
2130/A0/08/003/004/131 INTRODUCE LIFE SKILLS IN SCHOOLS	200,977.00
2130/A0/08/003/004/132 INTRODUCE LIFE SKILLS IN SCHOOLS	27,610.00
2130/A0/08/003/004/134 INTRODUCE LIFE SKILLS IN SCHOOLS	55,939.79
2130/A0/08/003/004/141 PROMOTE & SUPPORT LIFE SKILLS	42,012.00
2130/A0/08/003/004/142 PROMOTE & SUPPORT LIFE SKILLS	1,125.00
2130/A0/08/003/004/143 PROMOTE & SUPPORT LIFE SKILLS	255.60
2130/A0/08/003/004/144 PROMOTE & SUPPORT LIFE SKILLS	7,611.11
2130/A0/08/003/005/001 TECHNICAL SUPPORT	2,133.20
2130/A0/08/003/005/112 EDUCATION SERVICES TO OOS IDP	27,281.43
2130/A0/08/003/005/122 CONTINUITY OF EDUCATION IDP	(0.04)
2130/A0/08/003/005/123 CONTINUITY OF EDUCATION IDP	27,851.28
2130/A0/08/003/005/222 QUALITY IN SCHOOLS FOR IDP	(176.40)
2130/A0/08/003/005/311 EDUCATION SERVICES TO OOS REFUGEES	989.89
2130/A0/08/003/005/312 EDUCATION SERVICES TO OOS REFUGEES	25,450.05
2130/A0/08/003/005/321 CONTINUITY OF EDUCATION REFUGEES	-
2130/A0/08/003/005/322 CONTINUITY OF EDUCATION REFUGEES	-
2130/A0/08/003/005/412 CAPACITY BUILDING TEACHERS REFUGEES	(4,337.00)
2130/A0/08/003/005/421 QUALITY IN SCHOOLS FOR REFUGEES	20,601.00
Grand Total	21,066,554.03

Future Work Plan

Future planning continues to consider the changing operational environment in Iraq, the increased focus on early recovery and resilience interventions outlined by the Government of Iraq and UN partners for 2018 and 2019 and builds upon existing achievements and lessons learned from the previous years. Reinforcing strategic partnerships among humanitarian actors (NGOs and UN) remains one of the common priorities of 2019 response.

UNICEF planned action for 2019 is in line with the UN Recovery and Resilience Plan (RRP), with specific actions for children outlined in UNICEF's Recovery and Resilience for Children (RRC) appeal. The RRP is a two-year nexus framework that builds on significant achievements made for children through humanitarian action since 2014, while expanding into early recovery interventions that fast-track the social dimensions of reconstruction, restore confidence in the government, and improve equitable access to basic services and justice. UNICEF will work across 10 of Iraq's 18 governorates to support a range of interventions.

In 2019, UNICEF will consolidate achievements to further demonstrate and integrate the impact of SBM and LSCE interventions; scale up SBM to foster greater community engagement for enhanced quality of learning; and strengthen the system to better manage the recovery process in liberated areas and entrench decentralization at governorate levels and schools. A critical component will be in data capacity support and decentralised sector planning. Humanitarian responses will continue, but within the integrated results framework adopted during the annual planning process for 2017, whereby the humanitarian work areas were built into the access and quality components. UNICEF will continue to support the expansion of EMIS, and rollout of learning assessments at governorate level.

UNICEF will continue to support child- and youth-focused systems in line with the Government's commitment to decentralization of basic services. UNICEF emphasises support for longer-term interventions in close coordination with NGO partners and government, integrating capacity-building at all levels of government and civil society.

Table 6: Planned budget and available resources for 2019

Intermediate Result	Funding Type	Planned Budget	Funded Budget	Shortfall
GOVERNMENT CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT	RR	188,000.00	-	188,000.00
	ORR	-	12,955,936.62	(12,955,936.62)
	ORE	-	2,258,755.48	(2,258,755.48)
SCHOOL BASED MANAGEMENT	RR	-	-	-
	ORR	1,668,500.00	2,976,471.98	(1,307,971.98)
	ORE	1,478,620.00	1,160,030.31	318,589.69
OUT OF SCHOOL CHILDREN	RR	-	-	-
	ORR	2,220,147.90	6,265,341.34	(4,045,193.44)
	ORE	2,119,529.05	4,131,962.87	(2,012,433.82)
LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION	RR	-	-	-
	ORR	1,222,923.36	2,650,134.96	(1,427,211.60)
	ORE	783,948.91	929,519.81	(145,570.90)
Sub-total Regular Resources		188,000.00	-	188,000.00
Sub-total Other Resources - Regular		5,111,571.26	24,847,884.90	(19,736,313.64)
Sub-total Other Resources - Emergency		4,382,097.96	8,480,268.47	(4,098,170.51)
Total for 2019		9,681,669.22	33,328,153.37	(23,646,484.15)

NB: Funded budget as of 26 March 2019. Planned and Funded budget for ORR (and ORE, if applicable) excludes recovery cost. RR plan is based on total RR approved for the Country Programme duration. Other Resources shortfall represents ORR funding required for the achievements of results in 2019

Table 7: Education 2018-2019 plans by area of intervention*

UNICEF Outcome Area	UNICEF Recovery and Resilience for Children (RRC) objectives
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 5,000 teachers have improved capacity to deliver social cohesion-focused curricula
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Life Skills formally included in 3,000 schools' plans
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1,200 schools implementing the School Based Management (SBM) approach supported by an SBM policy framework
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ National learning assessment system established, supported by a functional Education Management Information System (EMIS)

(*) Based on the Recovery and Resilience for Children (RRC) appeal 2018-2019

Expression of Thanks

On behalf of Iraq's children, the internally displaced inside the country and those living in host communities, UNICEF takes this opportunity to express sincere gratitude to all partner governments, UNICEF National Committees, Foundations and private individuals for their continued and sustained support. In 2018, UNICEF and partners were enabled to provide life-saving and life-sustaining interventions, thanks to the generous contributions of donors including the governments of Canada, Czech Republic, Italy, Germany, Japan, Korea, Kuwait, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Qatar, Sweden, the United Kingdom (Department for International Development), the United States (Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance and the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration), as well as the European Union/ECHO. Additional humanitarian funding was received through the UNOCHA-administered Iraq Humanitarian Fund (IHF) and the Regional Development and Protection Programme (RDPP). Thanks also go to the individuals, groups, companies, and others, who gave to UNICEF's response in Iraq via the UNICEF National Committees in Germany, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and the United States of America, as well as via the UNICEF global and regional humanitarian thematic funds.

UNICEF extends special thanks to the Government of Denmark for providing flexible country-specific thematic funding for education that enabled the country office to be more responsive to the issues affecting children, with greater flexibility according to the changing needs on the ground.

Only through such support, joint efforts and coordination is it possible to respond to the needs of children in Iraq. UNICEF would also like to extend thanks to partners across all countries, including the Government of Iraq, for their tireless efforts in achieving results for children and focusing on saving lives, alleviating suffering and ensuring respect for children's rights.

Annex: Human Interest Story

“Decentralizing Iraq’s Education System to Improve Learning Outcomes for Children”

Iraq used to have one of the best education systems in the region but decades of violence, displacement and resulting poverty have substantially reduced the quality of education and learning outcomes, particularly for the most vulnerable children attending public schools.

In supporting the Government of Iraq to rebuild the education system and provide access to quality education for all its children, UNICEF is working to enhance de-centralization to enable devolved decision-making and improve the quality of learning.

“The education sector in Iraq is guided by the National Education Strategy. However, there is no overarching education sector plan that can systematically guide the implementation and monitoring of planned results and assessment of performance against the priority goals of the national strategy,” said Wongani Taalo, Chief of Education with UNICEF in Iraq

Although the Iraq education system is decentralized by law, it remains largely centralized. As such, planning capacity at governorate and lower levels is weak due to over-centralization of authority and decision making. The capacity of Directorates of Education is further undermined by the impact of conflicts and diminishing funding for the education sector.

With thematic funding, UNICEF has provided resources towards developing 11 governorate-specific education sector plans, which will provide the basis for developing a national education sector plan using a bottom-up approach. UNICEF contracted Cambridge Education to support the Directorates of Education¹¹ develop their improvement plans.

An orientation and capacity building workshop was conducted in Sulaymaniyah on 22-23 July 2018 and attended by Directors-General of each governorate, Heads of Planning at Department of Education, and UNICEF staff.

The main objectives were to develop a common understanding on the importance of costed sector plans, processes and required capacities, responsibilities and accountabilities, and how to foster ownership and leadership of the Ministry of Education and Departments of Educations.

“This is a good initiative which will help us do good planning and advocacy especially for an area like Ninewa with great needs,” said Wahid Farid Abdulkader, the Director-General for Ninewa.

“This step of decentralized sector planning is in the right direction and we should thank UNICEF for initiating it. As leaders of education in your respective governorates you have accepted to test the decentralization framework. If you succeed you will have provided the template for a national education sector plan,” said Dr Hamid Ahmed, of the Prime Minister’s Advisory Committee.

The workshop introduced the process and set tasks for sector analysis. Participants discussed the purpose, components and milestones of governorate sector plans. They explored their concerns and expectations and brainstormed on the procedures, challenges and mitigatory measures needed to produce credible sector plans. Finally, they developed tools for analysing access and coverage, learning and internal efficiency.

The challenge so far has been in how to meet the demand. Iraq has 18 governorates. Selecting 11 prioritized nine of UNICEF’s current focus. However, the World Bank expressed interest to support two additional governorates (Salahuddin and Diyala). That left eight governorates excluded.

In 2019, UNICEF will support in conducting the sector analyses, develop governorate level strategic goals and strategies, work on the costing and financing and to implement the plans.

¹¹ Anbar, Baghdad, Basrah, Dahuk, Diyala, Erbil, Kirkuk, Ninewa, Qadissiya, Salah al Din, and Thi Qar



©UNICEF/2018. Participants from Kirkuk and Thi Qar discuss in an education sector planning workshop in Sulaymaniyah



©UNICEF/2018. Participants from Basrah and Qadissiya discuss in an education sector planning workshop in Erbil.

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