

News from the Iraq Foundation



December 2009 Activities, Issue 41

Dear Friends,

We are thrilled to bring you news of the launch of IF's newest project designed to strengthen democracy in Iraq! The Post Election Democracy Project will conduct a wide breath of programming aimed at enhancing the Iraqi Council of Representatives after the election in March, equipping civil society to better engage and monitor government activity, and provide valuable leadership training to Iraqi youth. In addition to this exciting news, we are happy to report that IF and the Human Rights Advocacy Initiative (HRAI) Coalition conducted 33 activities to celebrate Human Right Day throughout Iraq as well as held a press conference in Baghdad. Also as part of HRAI, we continued implementing the small grants program this month, which supports local NGOs throughout Iraq and enables them to conduct a wide range of human rights advocacy projects in the provinces. IF staff also continued its work to support Iraqi widows and held mentoring sessions and several meetings to secure jobs and other income generation opportunities for the widows we serve. In the south, our staff is working hard to support NGOs in the southern governorates as part of our capacity-building project. To facilitate our transparency and accountability efforts, IF held a training workshop on Codes of Conduct in collaboration with the Iraqi Commission on Integrity.

In addition to all these exciting activities, IF's HRAI team also produced its 12th newsletter during December, which reports on HRAI coalition activities and the human rights situation in Iraq.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any questions about our projects or activities!

Sincerely,

Joseph Sandor
Communication Officer
Iraq Foundation

In This Issue

[IF holds a Graduation Ceremony for Widows in Basra](#)

[IF Holds 4th Human Rights Advocacy Workshop](#)

[IF holds a Graduation Ceremony for Widows in Basra](#)

[HRAI Coalition Member Wins Human Rights Superstar Award!](#)

[IF Donates Equipment to Iraq Commission on Integrity](#)

[IF Publishes 11th Human Rights Newsletter](#)

[Quick Links](#)

IF Launches the Post Election Democracy

Project in Iraq



IF is pleased to announce the launch of an exciting new project aimed at improving capacity and performance of parliamentarians in Iraqi Council of Representatives (CoR) after the elections scheduled for March 2010, raising the responsiveness and accountability of the government by empowering civil society, and expanding civic awareness and participation in the democratic process, especially among youth. Funded by the US Department of State's office of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, this three year project will be conducted throughout the country benefiting women parliamentarians, Iraqi youth, and civil society organizations.

[Learn More about the Post Election Democracy Project...](#)

IF and Human Rights Advocacy Initiative Members Celebrate Human Rights Day

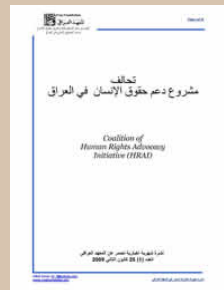


On December 10 2009, IF held a press conference in Baghdad to celebrate human rights day. The press conference, organized in collaboration with four Baghdad- based HRAI coalition members, launched human rights week activities and was attended by several Iraqi officials including Human Rights Ministry representative, Mr. Hussein Jasim Al-Zuhairi, and the head of the Iraqi Lawyers Union, Mr. Ali Al-Chamri.

From December 10 to 20, HRAI coalition successfully implemented more than 33 activities in 14 governorates. Activities included a puppet show, drawing competitions for children, football games for women, conferences and workshops in schools, poetry festivals about human rights, and radio and TV programs. All activities were implemented in collaboration with local officials and civic leaders. IF also distributed 20,000 human rights pins in Kurdish and Arabic and 2,000 copies of the Universal Periodic Report (UPR) that the HRAI coalition prepared and submitted to the UN on August 31 2009. The activities were covered by a considerable number of national and local media outlets.
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IF Broadcasts TV Spots to Promote Human Rights Awareness

IF also launched an intensive media campaign, broadcasting 50 TV

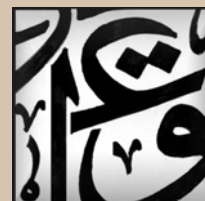


IF Publishes 12th Human Rights Newsletter!

The Human Rights Advocacy Initiative (HRAI) published its eleventh newsletter in December 2009. These newsletter reports on the human rights situation in Iraq. Formed in May 2008 by the Iraq Foundation, the goal of the HRAI project is to empower Iraqi human rights leaders to be better advocates for human rights. Published in Arabic, HRAI's monthly newsletters are available on our website.

[Read Newsletter \(December 2009\)](#)

Quick Links:



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spots advocating for human rights on primetime from December 7th to 11th on Al-Sharqiya, Al-Iraqiya, Al-Summariya, and Al-Furat TV stations. [Watch the TV Spot...](#)

IF Small Grant Awardees Implement Projects to Promote Human Rights

Also during the month of December, IF concluded the HRAI small grants activities. The Akad Association for Humanitarian Relief held its third and fourth educational workshops on "People's right to practice their own religion". The workshops were attended by 37 and 41 people and covered people's right to practice their religion in the international human rights convention, the Iraqi constitution and the Iraqi laws. The workshop also discussed minorities' plight in practicing their own religion in Iraq and the humiliation and other challenges that they face on a daily basis. The workshops issued a number of recommendations including raising awareness about these rights especially in schools.

[Learn More about HRAI Small Grants ...](#)

IF Conducts Mentoring Activities for Widows in Baghdad and Basra



On December 10, IF conducted a mentoring activity in Basra. 50 widows took part in this activity, which was designed to better assist participants in meeting the sewing and business standards necessary to compete in local markets Basra. On December 28, IF's WEP Basra team visited the

Directory for Labor and Social Works (DLSW) in Basra to discuss small grants opportunities and employment opportunities for the widows.

[View photos from the Basra mentoring activity...](#)

Throughout December, IF Baghdad team also met several times with US Embassy Commission on Strategic Initiative or Iraqi women and other government offices and private sector businesses and NGOs to source job opportunities for widows in Baghdad. To date, IF has secured employment for 26 widows in Baghdad. Training in Baghdad continues in both centers throughout the month.

[Learn More about WEP...](#)

IF Assists NGOs in the Southern Governorates

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In preparation for a capacity-building workshop scheduled in January 2010, IF's Southern Governorates NGO Capacity Building project staff followed-up with participating NGOs to monitor and assist in the implementation of the material, training, and techniques developed from the capacity building workshops and design a tailored curricula for January's workshop . To do this, IF staff conducted field visits and communicated regularly with each organization via emails and telephone calls.

[Learn More about the Project...](#)

IF Holds Code of Conduct Workshop in Conjunction with the Iraqi Commission on Integrity on Integrity



As part of IF's anti-corruption and transparency efforts, on Thursday December 24, 2009, IF held a Code of Conduct (COC) workshop in Baghdad in collaboration with the Iraqi Commission on Integrity (COI). Baghdad governor, the Baghdad governorate council members, senior officials, and general inspectors from Baghdad governorate council

attended the workshop along with civil society organizations. Total attendance was 128. The training pertained to the Code of Conduct (COC), associated compliance laws, and their applications within the government institutions in Iraq. The training was delivered by trainers from the COI.

Further workshops will follow on the Code of Conduct and other compliance laws as part of the Provincial Accountability and Governance (PAG) Project. As part of PAG, IF continued the delivery of technology and equipment to the COI as well as arranged meetings with potential NGO partners in the governorates.

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