

News from the Iraq Foundation



March 2009 Activities, Issue 32

Dear Friends,

We would like to take this opportunity to inform you about our recent activities and accomplishments during the month of March. In observation of International Women's Day, March 8, IF launched a media campaign focusing on the promotion of women's rights as well as sponsored a roundtable discussion on issues facing Iraqi women. During March, Executive Director Rend Al-Rahim traveled extensively throughout the country and region and appeared on many of Iraq's media outlets. We are also pleased to announce the graduation of 50 widows, who took part in our Widow's Empowerment Project (WEP) in Baghdad. IF staff held a coalition building meeting and advocacy workshop in Erbil as well as began recruiting for our literacy and computer training project in Mdaina, located in the southern governorate of Basra. In addition to these activities, IF's Human Rights Advocacy Initiative (HRAI) produced its third newsletter, which reports on the HRAI project 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

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IF Celebrates International Women's Day:

IF Launches 2nd Wave of Media Campaign for International Women's Day



In conjunction with International Women's Day, which was held world-wide on March 8, the Iraq Foundation launched the second wave of our Human Rights Advocacy Initiative's media campaign geared toward promoting the rights of women. The campaign utilizes a variety of media to promote the rights of women, including the production and broadcast of 70 television and 90 radio spots, which will be aired throughout Iraq on Al-Iraqiya radio and Al-Iraqiya TV. The campaign also erected ten full sized billboards

carrying our message and distributed 2,500 posters to various civil society organizations and state institutions. The second wave will continue until the end of April.

[Learn more about the Human Rights Advocacy Initiative...](#)

IF Sponsors Roundtable Discussion on Women's Rights in Iraq for International Women's Day

On March 10, also on the occasion of International Women's Day, IF sponsored a roundtable discussion with prominent political and civil society figures. The roundtable was broadcast on Al-Hurra TV, and featured several distinguished members of parliament, including MP Ms. Samira Al-Musawi, MP Ms. Maysoun Al-Damlouji, as well as former minister Ms. Azhar Al-Shaykhali. IF Executive Director Ms. Rend Al-Rahim, hosted the event. The discussion included a debate about the extent of the government's contribution to advancing the Iraqi women socioeconomic condition and the Iraq Foundation's contribution to promoting women's rights in Iraq.

IF Holds Graduation Ceremony for Iraqi Widows Baghdad



IF In the Media:

During the month of March, IF's Executive Director Rend Al-Rahim traveled throughout Iraq and the region promoting IF's vision. During her travels, Ms. Al-Rahim appeared on a number of Iraqi and Middle Eastern media outlets, including Al-Hurra, Al-Arabia, Al-Huriya, as well as Radio Sawa.

[Listen to the Radio Sawa Interview...](#)



IF Publishes 3rd Human Rights Newsletter!

The Human Rights Advocacy Initiative (HRAI) published its third newsletter in March. The newsletter reports on the human rights



On March 9, IF held a graduation ceremony to honor the 50 Iraqi widows completed the first cycle of training in Baghdad as part of the Widows Empowerment Project (WEP). During this ceremony the participating widows received certificates and small gifts to commemorate this

accomplishment. Joined by an additional 50 widows, who will begin the program's second training cycle in April, IF used this occasion to highlight conditions facing the widows and the urgent need for assistance and training programs. The ceremony was covered by a variety of media outlets and newspapers and was publicized throughout the country and region. In addition to the widows and their families, Iraqi ministry officials, including Samira Al-Musawi, head of the Committee on Women, Family and Children, as well as representatives from the Ministry of Human Rights, Baghdad Council, and the US Embassy, and IF's Executive Director, Rend Al-Rahim, attended the event.

In addition to the ceremony, IF's WEP staff also assisted three participating widows in finding a jobs in Baghdad. In Basra, 12 participating widows are working to establish their own sewing workshops, which would enable them to assist other widows in their communities, as part of an IRD grant. IF would also like to mention the donation of 16 sewing machines to participating widows.

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

IF Holds Coalition Building Meeting and Advocacy Workshop in Erbil



IF held a its third coalition building meeting on March 12, as part of the Human Rights Advocacy Initiative (HRAI) project The meeting aimed at strengthening the coalition established last May and also at improving coalition members' skills in using the Martus human rights documentation software.

In addition, HRAI coalition members participated in the project's second advocacy workshop from the 13 - 15. The goal of this workshop was to improve the report writing skills of coalition members. During the workshop, IF staff and coalition members met with several government officials including the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) Minister of Human Rights, and KRG's Minister of Civil Society. IF also continued advocacy initiatives nationwide and monitored human rights reports and activities in the media and the Iraqi Parliament.

[Learn more...](#)

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.

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IF Recruits for the Mdaina Education Project



During the month March IF staff started advertising for participants for the Mdaina Education Project (MEP) in various media outlets including the Nahrain website, AIFayha network, as well as local mosques and schools. In addition, IF staff also started developing the traditional literacy and computer training curricula to be used for the project.

[Learn more about MEP...](#)

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