

News from the Iraq Foundation



September 2009 Activities, Issue 38

Dear Friends,

During September, we have been working hard to implement projects to promote our vision of a free and democratic Iraq. IF is pleased to announce that we hosted an exhibition for Iraqi widows in Basra as part of our Widows Empowerment Project (WEP). As part of our work to empower the community of Mdaina, Iraq, we are equally pleased to report that we have successfully completed the Mdaina Education Project, which provided literacy training for 250 adults, computer training for 100 teachers and small business owners, and advanced IT training for 6 technology experts. IF's Human Rights Advocacy Initiative (HRAI) awarded three small grants to human rights groups in Iraq during September. IF's HRAI team also launched the fourth wave of its human rights media campaign, which advocates for civic and political rights. In addition to these activities, IF staff traveled throughout Iraq's southern provinces in preparation for October's capacity building workshops.

IF's HRAI team also produced its ninth newsletter during September, produced in an updated format, featuring photos, and media coverage. HRAI's newsletter 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 Hosts Sewing Exhibition in Basra for Iraqi Widows



To highlight the progress and success of the women participating in IF's Widows Empowerment Project (WEP), IF hosted an exhibition in Basra to showcase the goods that the widows have produced and allow them a chance to sell their goods in a market-style environment. The three-day exhibition began on Wednesday,

September 16, and ran through Friday, September 18th. The exhibition featured items produced by the women from both training centers in Qurna and Zubair, and opening remarks were given by Ms. Nasser, Basra Governorate Council Member and President of the Women's Committee of the Council. The exhibition was visited by several prominent officials from various local and regional government offices as well as representatives from Iraqi media outlets. A number of local citizens and proprietors of local businesses, such as medical equipment suppliers, attended the exhibition as well. The widows sold over 114 garments during the three days.

The hall space for this exhibition was donated by the Fine Artists Association in Basra, for which the Foundation is deeply appreciative.

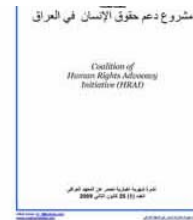
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IF Successfully Concludes the Mdaina Education Project



From March to September 2009, the Iraq Foundation (IF) successfully implemented the Mdaina Education Project (MEP) aimed at creating an adult literacy training program for the community of Mdaina and enhancing the professional skills and income generating opportunities for teachers and small business

owners of Mdaina. 356 adults -with an equal proportion of men and women- benefited from this training, including literate and illiterate citizens as well as teachers, small business owners and IT professionals. IF also refurbished and equipped an obsolete computer center in Mdaina



IF Publishes 9th Human Rights Newsletter!

The Human Rights Advocacy Initiative (HRAI) published its ninth newsletter in September 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 \(September 2009\)](#)

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and provided it with a satellite dish internet. With the help of IF, the computer center became fully operational and started generating revenue through providing various services including access to internet and printing services as well as renting wireless internet to homes and organizations in the surrounding neighborhood.

[Learn more...](#)

IF Awards Human Rights Organizations in Iraq with Small Grants



During the month of September, IF awarded three human rights organizations in Iraq small grants to bolster Iraqi human rights advocates and strengthen the culture of civil and political liberties in Iraq!

IF received 20 small grants proposals in response to a request disseminated in August. After IF reviewed the proposals, HRAI and IF Staff selected 3 to award. The winners were: The Akad Organization- Baghdad, The Humane Organization for Human Rights- Kut, and the Himam Institution for Civil Society Building, Basra. IF signed grant agreements with the awardees and provided them with basic mentoring on IF's implementation and reporting criteria and requirements. These organizations will receive \$3,000 each to implement projects related to human rights advocacy. The 3 selected organizations will advocate for 1) The right to practice one's own religion, 2) preventing violence in schools, and 3) children's rights. To date, IF has awarded 10 small grants as part of the HRAI project.

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

HRAI Coalition Launches 4th Wave of Human Rights Media Campaign



On September 1st 2009, IF launched the fourth wave of its human rights media campaign. The fourth wave campaign advocates for civic and political rights and comprises 70 TV and 90 radio spots and 10 billboards. TV spots broadcast once to twice a day and the radio spots

broadcast twice to 3 times a day. Billboards were disseminated in Baghdad major intersections. The fourth wave will continue until the end of October.

[View Media Campaign TV Spots...](#)

IF Conducts Field Visits in the Southern Governorates



During the month of September, IF Staff conducted numerous field visits throughout the southern governorates. Meeting with local NGOs, IF worked to prepare for an upcoming capacity building workshop, as part of the Southern Governorates Capacity Building Project. This project aims to promote the growth and effectiveness of civil society organizations in the Maysan, Nasriyya, and Basra provinces so

they can ensure that the interests of citizens are weighed by public institutions that make policy and allocate resources.

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