

CITIZENS CONTINUE TO DEMAND MORE RESPONSIVE GOVERNANCE

KEY FINDINGS OF QUALITATIVE PUBLIC
OPINION RESEARCH CONDUCTED IN
FIVE PROVINCES IN IRAQ

ANBAR, DIYALA, KIRKUK,
NINEWA, AND SALAHADDIN

AUGUST 2019

NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE

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This report was prepared by the National Democratic Institute with funding from the Government of Canada. NDI would like to acknowledge the key contributions by its partners Conflict Management Consulting (CMC) and Al Mustakilla for Research (IIACSS) in conducting this research. Ancuta Hansen, NDI-Iraq Senior Country Director, coordinated this research. Michael Josten and Maria Hrimech (CMC) contributed to research design and analysis. Rand Dagher (IIACSS) led the fieldwork. The report was edited by Sarah Beckerman, NDI Senior Program Manager and Sarah Giordano, NDI Senior Program Assistant, and designed by Marc Rechdane. For more information about this project or other NDI public opinion researches in Iraq please contact Ancuta Hansen at ahansen@ndi.org.

The National Democratic Institute is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, nongovernmental organization that has supported democratic institutions and practices in every region of the world for more than three decades. Since its founding in 1983, NDI and its local partners have worked to establish and strengthen political and civic organizations, safeguard elections, and promote citizen participation, openness and accountability in government. NDI conducts public opinion research to identify issues of public concern, track shifts in public perceptions and opinions, and contribute to evidence-based dialogue on policy and development programs.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Failing public services drive high demand for job opportunities.

The overall most pressing need among Iraqi citizens in provinces formerly occupied by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) is finding job opportunities and improving their economic situation. This is seen as a precondition for satisfying other necessities, which the government is failing to provide, mainly water and electricity. Corruption is viewed as pervasive and regarded as one of the main sources of poor governance, in addition to a perceived lack of interest in citizens' needs by the government and insufficient funding for local projects.

There is some awareness of gender differences in governance needs and access to services.

Local values and culture largely shape views about men and women's needs and access to public services and jobs. Considering both men and women to have similar needs and face similar challenges in society, male participants tended to be more ignorant to gender gaps. Some participants reported that because of culture and traditions, women do not enjoy their rights and freedoms the same way men do, while others participants expressed the belief that women are in fact privileged when interacting with the government or seeking jobs.

There are new openings for public participation in local governance, despite low trust in public institutions.

Low levels of satisfaction with public services, as well as a lack of awareness of provincial councils' priorities, drive low public trust in their ability to address citizens' main demands. However, participants recognized that they can have an influence by voting, first because they are the ones electing the provincial council, and then they can vote out the corrupt people, which would increase the institution's effectiveness and eventually people's trust.

Some openness to women in governance exists, although there are high barriers and elevated expectations.

While openings for public participation in local governance are small, women's contribution is seen as even more limited. Both female and male participants held strong beliefs that women are not given opportunities to adequately rep-

resent themselves in the public sphere. Although many participants can give some examples of local female leaders, such as provincial council members or school principals, there was overall agreement that women are underrepresented and marginalized. Even if some women run for office, many view Iraqi traditions as the main barrier that is restricting the acceptance of women in leadership roles.

Security is improving, but intra-region discrepancies are widening.

Many respondents feel safer in their communities, although ISIS and local criminals remain the main sources of concern. There are significant differences between provinces; in Anbar and Ninewa, a greater sense of safety led participants to express relief and gratitude for security forces. Enjoying freedom of movement is the single most cherished improvement of their personal situation. Nonetheless, Iraqis continue to be wary of the re-emergence of ISIS, particularly in Diyala, Kirkuk, and Salahaddin. Some blame the lack of coordination among security actors for breaches in security and are concerned that reverting to limited movement would impact their ability to keep jobs and provide for their families.

Trust in security forces drives cooperation and stability.

Many attribute the improvements in security to the regained trust in security forces, stressing that the conflict with ISIS improved the relations between citizens and armed forces. Participants felt that increased cooperation between the various security forces themselves, as well as between security forces and citizens, respect for the rule of law, and qualified security personnel and leadership would further contribute to consolidating public trust.

Views toward the justice system are mixed.

Some participants perceive that justice is accessible to all and that there is a fair distribution of justice and no discrimination. Others, however, hold opposite views and report issues with due process. Regardless of their positive or negative sentiments towards the justice system, participants generally agreed that nepotism and bribery plague the system—those who pay money or have the right connections are in an advantageous position in front of judges. While participants agreed that combating nepotism in the justice system is important, there was a feeling of helplessness about how this could be achieved.

Social justice could consolidate a sense of cohesion and shared identity.

Ethno-sectarian relations continue to improve as the conflict with ISIS unified the country. Participants reported citizens living in harmony; however, some felt that their values had been lost in the past years, and consequently had withdrawn to their communities. Additionally, politicians are seen as sowing divisions along sectarian lines for their own benefit.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 RESEARCH CONTEXT

A year and a half after ISIS was officially defeated, Iraqis still grapple with a range of systemic issues that resurfaced once the security situation improved: crumbling infrastructure, poor public services, and widespread corruption. Additionally, the recent conflict left a legacy of physical and psychological suffering, material destruction, and uncertainty about the future for many internally displaced persons (IDPs). As a recent survey conducted by the National Democratic Institute (NDI) shows,¹ a majority of Iraqis in the provinces covered by this research are not satisfied with the pace of the government's efforts to rebuild their cities; have a low trust in the local and central government's ability to manage their communities and the country effectively; and have little appetite to reintegrate individuals who still live in camps and are suspected of having ties with ISIS.

With funding from Global Affairs Canada, NDI is implementing a three-year program to elevate women's voices from Anbar, Diyala, Kirkuk, Ninewa, and Salahaddin and provide them with the skills and tools to effectively engage with the local government in an advisory capacity through women's advisory boards. These actions would foster the wellbeing of women and girls in Iraq, increase their visibility, and contribute to the establishment of sustainable peace and resilient local governance. The present research aims to inform the work of the women's advisory boards and, through this public-facing report, to provide local government institutions, civil society, political parties, and the international community with insights about public perceptions regarding service delivery, security, justice, and social relations in the provinces covered by this research.

This report examines potential gaps between community needs and the authorities' response; views on the responsiveness and effectiveness of the local government, particularly provincial councils; and ways to improve their communica-

¹ **Iraqis Welcome Improved Security and Social Cohesion, but Discontent with Government Undermines Stability, NDI, 2019**

tion with citizens. Building on previous research about gender norms and roles in Iraq post ISIS,² this research analyzes how gender shapes specific every-day needs and relations. It also explores perceptions of women serving as leaders in their communities, and potential openings to strengthen women's roles.

1.2 METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

NDI conducted this research with support from Conflict Management Consulting (CMC) and Al Mustakilla for Research (IIACSS). The research consisted of 10 focus group discussions and 14 key informant interviews (KIs), fielded between June 25 and July 2, 2019. Two gender-segregated focus groups discussions were organized in each of the five recently liberated provinces of Anbar, Diyala, Kirkuk, Ninewa, and Salahaddin; additionally, 12 KIs were conducted in the target provinces and two KIs were conducted with IDPs in Erbil.

The focus groups discussion and interview guides followed a similar overall structure across provinces. However, while the goal of the group discussions was to hear from participants' direct experience, key informants were asked to leverage their knowledge and experience gained in their capacity as community leaders—activists in civil society organizations, religious figures, or professionals such as social workers, doctors, or teachers—to reflect more broadly on the issues and dynamics of their communities.

To help participants feel at ease in order to freely express opinions and actively engage in these discussions, participants in each focus group were recruited to be demographically homogenous with regard to sex (six female groups and four male groups), age, education level, ethnicity, and general perception towards the current local situation. Focus groups targeted returnees and individuals who were not displaced by the recent conflict, mostly Sunni Arabs, whereas most of the KIs targeted specifically ethnic minorities (three Turkmen, two Kurds, one Yezidi, one Christian, one Shabak, and one Shia). Women interviewers interviewed women key informants and moderated women's focus group discussions. See the *Appendix* for detailed information regarding the participants' demographics. In total, 108 participants participated in the study (94 in the focus group discussions and 14 in the KIs). The research is qualitative in nature and not statistically representative. The info graphics included in this report are based on quasi-statistics derived from individual keyword coding.

2. KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS

2.1 FAILING PUBLIC SERVICES DRIVE HIGH DEMAND FOR JOB OPPORTUNITIES

The overall most pressing need among citizens in the sampled areas is finding job opportunities and improving their economic situation, which is seen as a precondition for satisfying other needs. Research participants expressed wide-ranging dissatisfaction with the government's ability to provide basic services. Water and electricity are the most important needs, as they are key to sustaining a living. Corruption is viewed as pervasive and regarded as one of the main sources of poor governance, in addition to a perceived lack of interest in citizens' needs by the government and insufficient funding for local projects.



I can survive without electricity but I can't without having a job. So, if I have work, I can buy an electric generator and with money I can have water. But if I don't have a job and there's no water and electricity, who is going to provide me with what I need?

– *Sunni Arab man, Ninewa*

The data indicates that the insufficiency of basic commodities provided by the government, ranging from access to potable water to electricity to education and healthcare, is the main driver of an urgent need for incomes that would allow Iraqi families to purchase private services instead. In addition to gender competition over limited jobs and potential exposure

to corruption, this situation could exacerbate social inequality between those who are able to bypass deficient public services and those who cannot. In turn, these combined factors could have multi-layer consequences. First, an increased resentment toward the political elite could widen the divide between politicians and citizens. Second, a fragile social cohesion fostered by the fight against ISIS could deteriorate as a feeling of social injustice takes root. Finally, religious extremism could increase; studies indicate that perceived economic inequality is a more salient driver of religious extremism than poverty alone.

Focus group participants in Anbar, Diyala, and Ninewa, in particular, said that finding employment was their first priority. Discussions revealed a deep reliance on the government to provide jobs—especially among university graduates—as well as pervasive structural corruption in the public employment sector. A Sunni Arab man from Anbar reported, “My wife and I graduated from college eight years ago and haven’t gotten jobs yet because we have to pay \$10,000 for a government job.” As the precarious economic situation affects every aspect of people’s lives, frustrations run high as a man from Anbar described, “Every young man wants a house and a wife, and this comes from having an income whether from an ordinary job or freelance jobs. However, the government is not providing the chance for daily jobs, nor it is opening factories for permanent jobs.”

Other sources of concern are the access and the quality of education and healthcare. Overcrowded schools, insufficient kindergartens, and poorly managed hospitals that lack basic medication are topics associated with corruption and lack of interest in addressing citizens’ needs. Finally, some women participants were particularly concerned about potential youth radicalization as a consequence of poverty and lack of opportunities. A Sunni woman from Ninewa explained her fear that youth might join ISIS because “they will provide them with things that the government cannot.”

“

The most pressing needs are the provision of water, electricity, and general services such as paving streets. We are not demanding too much... we are just demanding the provision of life necessities.

– *Sunni Arab man, Salahaddin*

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We are a family of 25 people. I have four children and they don't have jobs. My husband doesn't have a salary although he served in the army for fifteen years. My son has a degree in management and economy; he submitted his papers twenty times and he hasn't been accepted, yet.

– *Sunni Arab woman, Ninewa*

• • •

Since we were liberated from ISIS and until this moment, there's no construction in Mosul. The houses of my daughters and sons were demolished and the government did not reconstruct them, so they had to do it themselves.

– *Sunni Arab woman, Ninewa*

• • •

The situation is not good in terms of education, either. Schools are crowded and have so many students, and some schools have three attendance shifts.

– *Sunni Arab man, Kirkuk*

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The residents of [Khanaqin] are poor and the public schools are not good. Now, private schools have started to open but they are expensive. Children suffer when they see their friends go to private schools when they can't afford to do the same. This is a failure of the government. So, we want the government to provide the needed support. (...) “Can you believe that we don't have a kindergarten? No health care; the hospitals don't have the necessary medication for patients, so we have to buy it from outside the hospital. I am one of the people who went to the hospital for high blood pressure and they did not have aspirin (...) so my brother brought it from outside the hospital.

– *Kurdish man, Diyala*

• • •

In hospitals, there is a lot of corruption and there is negligence toward patients. For example, my daughter got sick a few days ago, at night. The doctors told us that there was no intensive care unit, and told the patients to go home and come back in the morning. My mother also got sick because her blood pressure was unstable and, when we went to the hospital, they told us that they didn't have [an instrument to measure blood pressure] or medication, so we bought the medicines from the pharmacies outside the hospital.

– *Sunni Arab woman, Diyala*

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2.2

THERE IS SOME AWARENESS OF GENDER DIFFERENCES IN GOVERNANCE NEEDS AND ACCESS TO SERVICES

Local values and culture largely shape views about needs and access of men and women to public services and jobs; however, male participants tended to be blinder to gender gaps. Men largely considered both sexes to have similar needs and to face the same challenges in society: finding jobs to support their families, suffering from poverty, and being affected by a lack of basic public services and security.

“

I think the most urgent need for women is to be provided with job opportunities, because this is my right and the right of every individual. The woman's role is not only at home; she has her own needs. So, if she doesn't work and she doesn't earn money, how is she going to be able to achieve her needs? This is a woman's right. And it's true that she's not equal to the man, but she has the right to work. They consider it 'freedom,' but it not the right word. In the end, I think the most urgent need is providing job opportunities for women, and providing safety and security.

— Sunni Arab woman, Salahaddin

A few participants reported that women do not enjoy their rights and freedom in the same way men do because of culture and traditions, as they face multiple barriers in their communities including lack of access to education and early marriage. A Sunni Arab male participant from Ninewa explained that, in his view, women's rights are human rights; however, they are not respected, “Women are mothers, sisters, wives and daughters, and their needs are just like any other human being needs—education and practicing the rights granted to women by Islam.

But for the time being we're not giving women even a part of their legitimate rights, and they are being oppressed by ignorance and early marriage.”

In contrast, some participants expressed the belief that women have no pressing needs. Moreover, they viewed women as generally privileged, especially if they hold a university degree, because they could find jobs easier than men could. As a Sunni Arab man from Ninewa explained, “Women have obtained their rights and needs. Even at public departments, they are well appreciated and get more support than men.” Some focus groups participants also said that women are in a better position, because they do not bear the cultural pressure of being responsible to provide for the family, as this is a man's responsibility.

MEN'S GOVERNANCE PRIORITIES

FINANCIAL SITUATION
EDUCATION SECTARIANISM **ROADS**
JUSTICE WOMEN'S RIGHTS
FOOD **HEALTH CARE**
WASTE MANAGEMENT
JOBS AND EMPLOYMENT
FIGHTING CORRUPTION **WATER** PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
SECURITY AND SAFETY **ELECTRICITY**
HARRASSMENT

WOMEN'S GOVERNANCE PRIORITIES

WASTE MANAGEMENT
FIGHTING CORRUPTION
RECONSTRUCTION **FOOD** HARRASSMENT
HEALTH CARE **ELECTRICITY**
JOBS AND EMPLOYMENT
JUSTICE FINANCIAL SITUATION
WATER EDUCATION SECTARIANISM
SECURITY AND SAFETY
WOMEN'S RIGHTS SERVICES
ROADS

Furthermore, some male participants explained that if a man found a job he would be able to support his family—including his wife—and provide all that they needed: education, services, and basic life needs; therefore, the women’s needs are adjacent to the men’s needs. This explains a shared understanding across provinces that when resources and opportunities are scarce, men’s needs come first. A Sunni Arab male from Ninewa explained, “The men in our community are not having their needs or rights met, so women are considered a second priority. If the husband gets his rights, she will get hers as a consequence.”

2.3

NEW OPENINGS FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE, DESPITE LOW TRUST IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

A low level of satisfaction with public services, as well as a lack of awareness of provincial councils’ priorities, drives low public trust in the provincial council’s ability to address citizens’ demands. Provincial councils are perceived as inaccessible to regular citizens; across provinces, participants mentioned that they did not know how to approach their elected representatives if they had an issue.

“

No, I don’t trust the provincial council, because there are a lot of promises. You know the problem that was raised two or three months ago regarding some corruption cases. If there is no credibility and trust, although there are bridges between citizen and the politician, of course, there won’t be any trust.

— Sunni Arab man, Anbar

A Sunni Arab female participant from Diyala said that the opacity of the provincial council made her lose confidence in the institution, “[...] they did not even allow me to visit them. The simplest thing, they don’t allow the citizens to come inside and speak to them.” To build trust in provincial councils, participants said that it is important, but not sufficient, that officials

listened to their pleas. Citizens also want to see tangible results in areas that directly affect their everyday lives—service delivery, fighting corruption, and creating job opportunities—as well as transparency and accountability.

“

I have to see their actions so I can trust the provincial council, so when I see them building the bridges and the infrastructure, then I will trust them.

— Sunni Arab woman, Ninewa

In the male focus group discussion in Diyala, participants reflected on the role of citizens and their responsibility toward their community to find solutions to the challenges and problems they face. These participants recognized that they can have an influence

by voting, first because they are the ones electing the provincial council, and then they can vote out the corrupt people, which would increase the institu-

tion's effectiveness and eventually people's trust. A male participant from Diyala noted, "The provincial council is corrupt. It's our fault because we elected them although they are not qualified for their positions. We just put the wrong people in the wrong place."

The participants had broad expectations from their elected representatives; however, there were diverging views about who is responsible for which service. Overall, participants believed that most public services fell either under the responsibility of the provincial council or both the provincial council and central government. When it comes to awareness of the responsibilities and priorities of each level of the government, including the district councils, provincial councils, and the central government, responses were mixed.

Community leaders whose voices were captured in key informant interviews were more confident in their ability to distinguish the responsibilities of different layers of government. As a Yezidi female participant from Ninewa said that, "the role of the government is clear and the citizens are aware of what is being provided," while others, especially participants in focus group discussions admitted having little understanding of the provincial councils should be doing. A Sunni Arab female participant from Anbar thoughts that "the role of the provincial council is to renovate and repair bridges and streets, and fix the lights in the main streets;" and a Sunni Arab female participant from Ninewa said, "We don't know exactly what the responsibilities of the provincial council are because the citizens serve themselves. The simplest example is that public spaces are not cleaned, and must be cleaned by the people."

Little awareness of the priorities of the government contributes to mistrust toward elected officials. A female key informant in Kirkuk said that she did not believe that, "people are familiar with what the provincial council is doing. If they heard promises from the officials, they all know that these are false promises; [therefore] they lost trust in them." In contrast, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have moved to serve as a stopgap in the researched communities, and have built a positive reputation. Participants during in-depth interviews mentioned the positive impact of assistance delivery by some local NGOs, including Ahbab Al Mustafa, the Barzani Foundation, and Basmet Khai, as well as the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

“

The current support is provided by non-governmental organizations; we are being provided with very little support from the government. You know that more than one area was affected [by ISIS]. Mosul received more attention from the government than other governorates.” (...) “These organizations are currently providing health care and food distribution services; (...) we rarely notice the government doing that or improving our situation.

– *Yezidi woman, Ninewa*

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[A civil society organization] established a project for the widows. It’s a tailoring and knitting workshop for women. The organizations provide for us with more than the provincial council [does].

– *Sunni Arab woman, Anbar*

• • •

There are organizations like ‘Ahabab Al Mustafa’, which is a civil organization (a mosque) and it is not governmental. This organization helps widows and poor people and provides them with clothes or financial aid.

– *Sunni Arab woman, Anbar*

”

Participants reported an overall lack of communication with provincial councils stemming mainly from the councils' lack of interest in and appropriate mechanisms for citizen engagement, although a few recognized the possibility, in principle, for direct communication with individual officials. Some participants reported that although they tried multiple times to communicate with the provincial councils—and a few even made complaints or recommendations—they felt that the interaction was meaningless because they did not receive any answers.

Key informant interview participants in particular articulated that there is some openness from provincial councils and governors to engage with citizens, either in person or through social media. Nevertheless, most times these interactions were seen as symbolic and did not lead to meaningful listening or solutions to citizen problems, “[The government] doesn’t allow the citizen to review certain issues. The only thing that the citizen is allowed to interfere with is elections,” reported a Turkmen female participant from Kirkuk.



Yes, there is [some communication] through members; each member of the provincial council has an audience and communicates with it.

– Turkmen man, Kirkuk

While some provincial councils have Facebook pages where they share information about the council’s activities and receive comments from citizens, research participants expressed a preference for face-to-face meetings by opening up the councils to citizens, creating citizen-liaison units, or organizing public discussions. Still, social media and dedicated phone numbers could effectively complement direct communication and be inexpensive ways for citizens to receive information or submit complaints. Provincial council committees in particular could raise their profiles by conducting listening tours and town-hall meetings to inform local policy.



Nobody listens to us.

– Sunni Arab man, Diyala

Participants were keen on opening up communication channels with their official representatives, despite their little confidence that this would contribute effectively to solving their problems. As a man from Kirkuk explained, “Communication is useful only if they listen to people; for example, if you go to any security checkpoint, you will find that it has a phone number for complaints, but they don’t answer if you call... so how can this be useful if nobody answers or responds to your request?”

Moreover, there is a sense that participants have capitulated in the face of ineffective public management—often plagued by corruption—and they are not willing to trust any government institutions until they see hard proof of progress on issues that matter to them. As such evidence is slow to appear, the fragile optimism brought by the defeat of ISIS has rapidly worn out and a deep frustration with the political elite is setting in. A Sunni Arab woman participating in a focus group discussion in Salahaddin said, “We are talking to dead people... it’s useless. Nobody listens to us.” In a similar vein, a Sunni Arab male from Salahaddin noted his disappointment and said, “We provided suggestions and recommendations for how to improve education and schools because they are about to collapse. [The authorities] examined the issue, yet they did nothing.”

“

The provincial council is able to communicate with the citizens because we aren’t living in the ‘70s of the last century. There are social media websites and for sure they have pages through which they can see the suffering of citizens. But they don’t have sufficient solutions. The budget that was allocated for Mosul is supposed to be bigger than the budget of Baghdad. But, in reality, only a small budget was allocated for Mosul. Thus, the governments in Baghdad and Erbil should solve this.

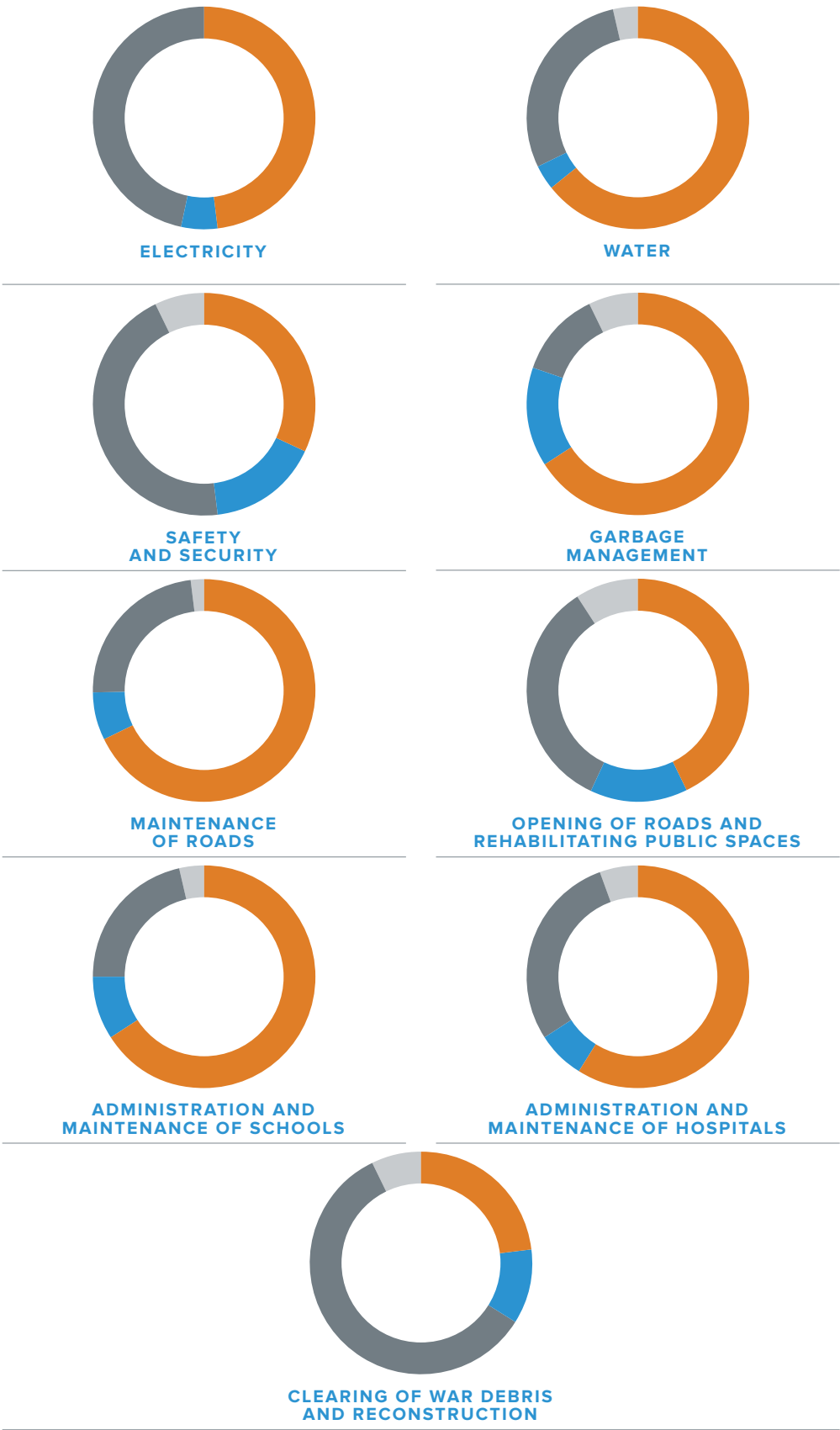
– Sunni Arab man, Ninewa

Undeterred by a broad pessimism regarding politicians’ willingness to change, some participants contributed suggestions about ways to improve the situation in their communities. Top demands referred to curbing corruption in government, including within provincial councils and hospitals; holding leaders accountable; as well as improving monitoring and increasing control over the performance of public institutions and their staff. Finally, some participants stressed the importance of fair treatment, regardless of ethno-sectarian identity. A Kurdish

key informant from Kirkuk said, “They must treat everyone fairly and feel for the citizens. They should serve all regions, not just the Kurdish and Arab areas, but serve everyone.”

FEMALE

Female participants' perceptions about responsibilities of different levels or government

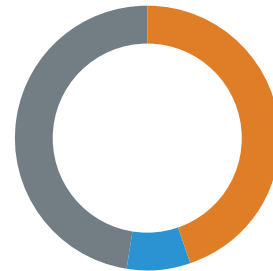


MALE

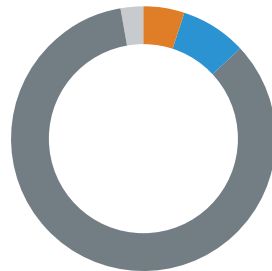
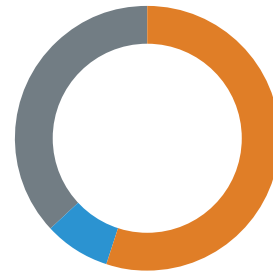
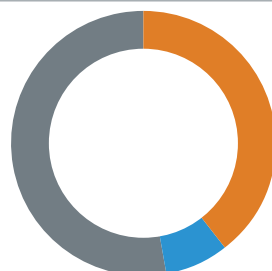
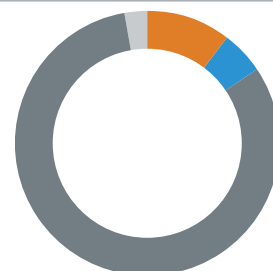
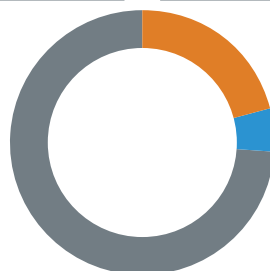
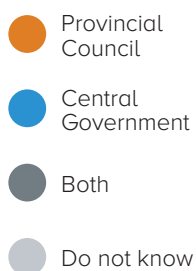
Male participants' perceptions about responsibilities of different levels of government



ELECTRICITY



WATER

SAFETY
AND SECURITYGARBAGE
MANAGEMENTMAINTENANCE
OF ROADSOPENING OF ROADS AND
REHABILITATING PUBLIC SPACESADMINISTRATION AND
MAINTENANCE OF SCHOOLSADMINISTRATION AND
MAINTENANCE OF HOSPITALSCLEARING OF WAR DEBRIS
AND RECONSTRUCTION

“

Members of the provincial council should open a complaints office in order to host the citizens and listen to their complaints.

– *Sunni Arab woman, Salahaddin*

• • •

They are supposed to be in the field and listen to the citizens' needs more than the [non-governmental] organizations.

– *Sunni Arab woman, Ninewa*

• • •

Allocate a special phone number that is particularly assigned for problems and only the governor answers it in order to solve the citizens' problems; or allocate a complaint box so that their problems reach the provincial council.

– *Sunni Arab woman, Anbar*

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If I was the governor, I would do field visits and if I noticed any broken street I would contact the responsible party for street maintenance and hold them accountable if they don't repair the street.

– *Sunni Arab man, Salahaddin*

• • •

Open space for investment companies because the government is incapable of providing the right services. Therefore, a safe environment should be provided for these companies to serve the country and thus job opportunities would be available for the young people.

– *Sunni Arab woman, Diyala*

• • •

Establishing a committee that is close to citizens, in order for the provincial council and the central government to respond to people's needs, as well as following the social media pages of citizens who publish their needs and demands.

– *Christian woman, Ninewa*

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Participants across provinces covered by the research also noted that while the government was primarily responsible for addressing citizens' needs, constituents themselves have a role in ensuring functional local governance and improved delivery by the public institutions. Their willingness to participate in public life and engage in the political process outside of elections demonstrates a timid but increased understanding of the relations between citizens and their elected representatives in a democratic country.

The study shows an appetite for voter education campaigns, issue-based advocacy from civic groups, and cooperation with authorities to maintain proper conditions in their communities. To leverage the credibility of civil society organizations in the community, some participants call on them to facilitate their interaction with local power holders, "We want organizations that communicate with the concerned authorities because we cannot reach the concerned people," said a Sunni Arab female participant from Diyala.



Basically, the governor delivers services but there should be some interaction from the citizens, so if the governor instructed the municipality to clean the streets, people should cooperate and not throw garbage.

– Sunni Arab man, Ninewa

Local organizations are also well positioned to conduct voter education campaigns ahead of the upcoming provincial elections slated for April 1, 2020. A Sunni Arab male participant from Diyala explained, "First, we should have awareness campaigns, so that the citizens would be aware of whom to elect. Second, replace the managers in the provincial council. Third, activate the laws, like the employee who receives bribery has to be punished." Finally, there is even a call for participatory budgeting, a process of democratic deliberation and decision making, in which ordinary people decide how to allocate part of a public budget. "We can submit projects to the provincial council and the provincial council can approve them and provide the budget, and there should be local supervision to implement them," said a Sunni Arab male participant from Diyala.



Civil society organizations should work more to increase the citizens' awareness and make them understand that they can question the officials that they elected and not to re-elect those officials again, because this way they will contribute in destroying the country.

– Sunni Arab man, Diyala

2.4

SOME OPENNESS TO WOMEN IN GOVERNANCE EXISTS, ALTHOUGH THERE ARE HIGH BARRIERS AND ELEVATED EXPECTATIONS

While openings for public participation in local governance are small, women's contribution is seen as even more limited. Both female and male participants held strong beliefs that women are not given opportunities to adequately represent themselves in the public sphere. Although many participants can give some examples of local female leaders, such as provincial council members or school principals, there was overall agreement that women are underrepresented and marginalized.



We are a Middle Eastern society; you know the customs and traditions. For women it's harder. There are many things women can't say; they can't reach justice and get their rights. But we have an example of our sister Nadia Murad who was capable of delivering her voice through mass media, as well as the United Nations. She is a role model but not all women have her courage.

— *Sunni Arab man, Anbar*

Even if some women run for office or hold positions in public institutions, many view Iraqi traditions as the main barrier that restricted the acceptance of women in leading roles, as a Turkmen female participant from Kirkuk explains, "Very few women participate, because nobody supports them or opens the way for their participation." A Sunni Arab male participant from Ninewa further describes the tension between new gender roles and conservative tra-

ditions in the Iraqi society, "A woman could be a head of a health directorate, but it's not accepted to be in a leading position because we are a tribal community."

Some male and female participants further noted that women are not only prevented from leadership positions, but are also constrained in other spheres of life. According to them, women's restrictions stretch to economic participation due to conservative social norms as well as widespread sexual harassment. A Sunni Arab woman from Salahaddin said that women in the workplace "may face violence or disrespect," and a Sunni male from Anbar indicated a culture of shame that puts social pressure on families, stating, "If the woman works in a specific field, people will gossip about her and her family due to the customs and traditions."

Reflecting the more conservative end of the spectrum of opinions, a few men and women from all provinces covered by this research were wary of female participation because of the decaying morals in today's modern society. Street harassment, as well as a desire to reinforce women's traditional roles as a wife and mother, serve as frequent justification for discouraging women—especially those who do not have a university degree—from pursuing jobs or other activities outside the home.

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She has an active role in the community, but her scope of thinking is limited.

– *Sunni Arab man, Ninewa*

• • •

I prefer that a woman stays home due to the nature of our community, but she has the right to work if she's got a higher education degree. Yet, I prefer to keep her a housewife because of the prevailing depravity in the community, like harassment.

– *Sunni Arab man, Ninewa*

• • •

Since I'm a housewife and I didn't finish my education, I think a woman's place is at home. She needs to take care of it and take care of her husband and kids. And I don't have any needs other than taking care of my home and family.

– *Sunni Arab woman, Salahaddin*

• • •

Women are oppressed in general in Diyala and cannot express their opinions directly.

– *Sunni Arab man, Diyala*

• • •

The women of Anbar are far away from that. Whether socially or in the media, their participation is less than 3% in my point of view.

– *Sunni Arab man, Anbar*

• • •

Women are unprotected, subject to a very bad situation, and also ignored. Women in Northern Iraq now have a voice. I would dare anyone to harass them there, because they have rights, and authority does exist! But here there isn't anything.

– *Sunni Arab man, Anbar*

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Regardless, some participants expressed support for more women in leadership positions. Several participants pointed out that having female leaders is long overdue and plays a role in ending the oppression of women, trusting them, and giving them a fair chance to represent themselves. A few participants explicitly justified this by mentioning gender-specific characteristics that would qualify women for being leaders. A female focus group participant in Kirkuk explained that women “know people’s needs, and women must be decent in their work because they will be responsible for all groups in the community. In the view of a Shabak woman from Hamdaniya, “Women must stand up and fight society in all ways. Women in Ninewa are oppressed; they must support each other and cooperate. [...] Women want to participate, because they represent half of society so they must be involved.”

To overcome traditional barriers to women’s participation in governance, participants highlighted the importance of trust and equal treatment of men and women. Trust was particularly seen as a vital prerequisite in order to achieve more female leadership. According to several participants, women leaders can earn public trust by proving their capacity, including by efficiently implementing projects in the community. Along these lines, a woman in Diyala said, “If she provides a service, then for sure I will trust her.” In addition to advocating for campaigns to raise social acceptance, some participants called for formal mechanisms to boost women’s participation, such as quotas and capacity-building centers for women.

In order to accept her, participants expect to see a diverse set of qualities in a female leader. In their view, a female leader should be educated (have a degree), which many see as an important indicator of competency. In addition, women are expected to be altruistic, honest, strong, and courageous, but also good listeners and polite; efficient, but also respectful; brave, but also modest. A demand for honesty comes from frustration over perceived widespread corruption and cronyism in Iraqi politics. Participants explained that it was important for them that a woman leader not get her position through connections and use it for personal gain, but instead earned it through experience and expertise. Finally, female leaders also expected to achieve results and not just deliver “promises.”

“

Women are half or all of society, and we are definitely in need of women who make our voices heard, because no matter how much men know about women, they will not be able to feel what women feel; they are not kind-hearted like women, and they will not provide women with their needs like a woman in a leadership position would.

– *Yezidi woman, Ninewa*

• • •

The most important thing is that she has a degree and is educated and has a progressive mentality. She has to be an honest and decent person and care about the people of her governorate.

– *Sunni Arab woman, Anbar*

• • •

They [female leaders] must be activists in the field of human rights and have a university degree.

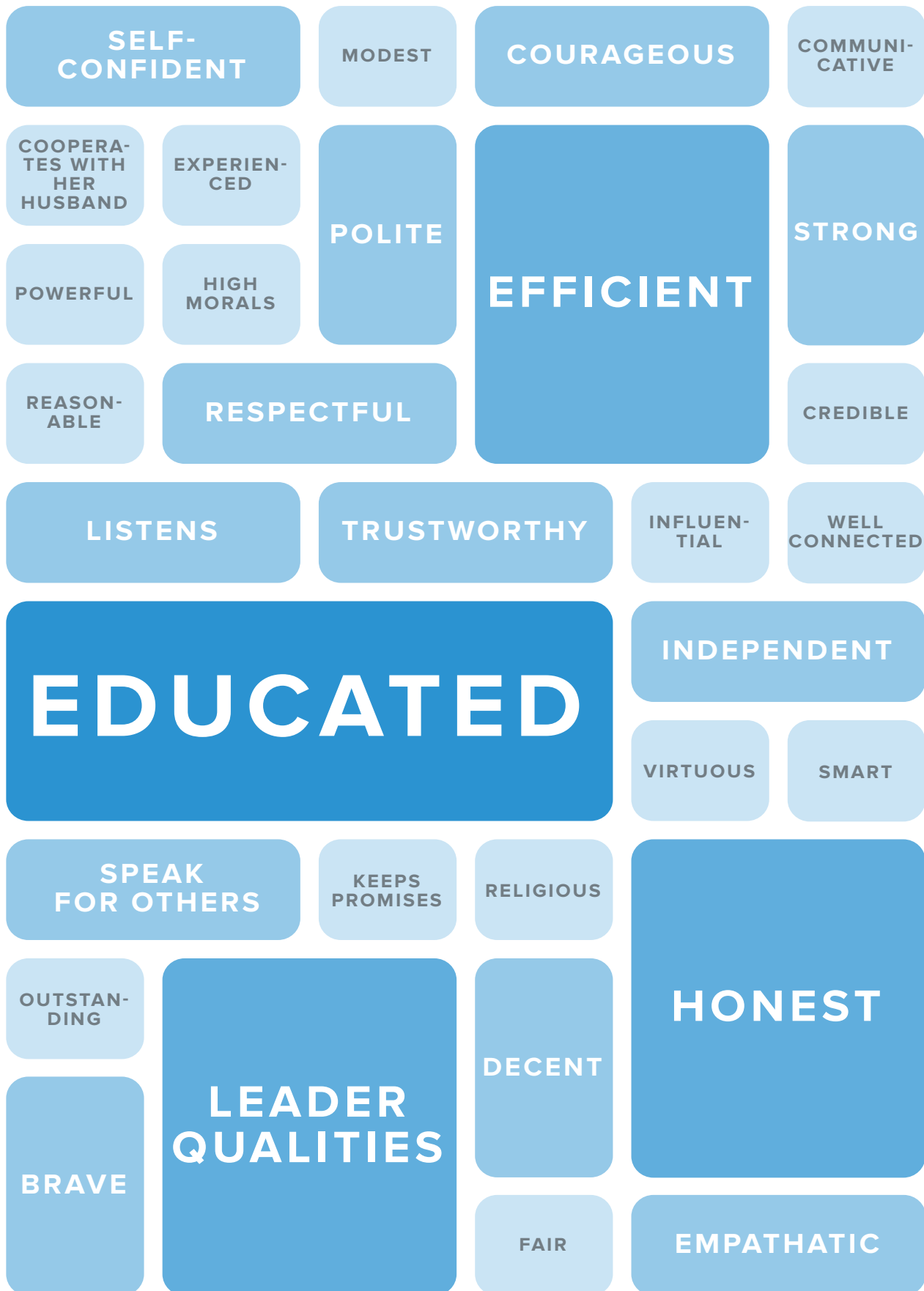
– *Sunni Arab man, Anbar*

• • •

[Female leaders must be] educated, work for and dedicate themselves to others; consider a lot of problems; introduce ideas and start implementing them. [...] A strong personality is the most important thing. A woman should have a strong personality and not be affected by what others say. A woman who is self-confident is capable of doing anything, whether inside the governorate or in camps.

– *Sunni Arab woman, Anbar*

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Desired qualities of women leaders

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She has to be honest and have integrity and stay away from parties and sectarianism, and avoid nepotism and employing her relatives in the government.

– *Sunni Arab man, Diyala*

• • •

To be strong and to execute what she promises, not just talk and no action.

– *Sunni Arab woman, Ninewa*

• • •

Women must be supported by the community, just like men are, because they encounter objections from their fathers or brothers.

– *Sunni Arab woman, Kirkuk*

• • •

There should be a center for women, with female staff, so the woman can communicate her suffering with them.

– *Sunni Arab woman, Salahaddin*

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There should be a law to advocate for women because the quota states that for each three men there is only one woman in the council.

– *Sunni Arab man, Anbar*

• • •

They [women] must be supported by the government or organizations and develop their capabilities.

– *Turkmen woman, Salahaddin*

• • •

Women have many ideas that can benefit society, but because of our traditions, any project that they provide will be canceled and then they will be frustrated.

– *Sunni Arab man, Anbar*

• • •

There are activities at the level of the whole province, including cultural and discussion activities, but what have we changed in the society? Have we changed the thinking of the rural areas? These women deserve to be leaders. The theft and seeking positions is the problem... when the one who leads the society is the first who steals from it!

– *Sunni Arab man, Anbar*

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2.5 SECURITY IS IMPROVING BUT INTRA-REGION DISCREPANCIES ARE WIDENING

Overall, participants report improved security and safety, but ISIS and local crime remain the main sources of concern for many. There are significant differences between provinces: in Anbar and Ninewa, a greater sense of safety led participants to express their relief and gratitude for the improved security situation—a rapid departure from the violence and insecurity during ISIS. Enjoying freedom of movement is the single most cherished improvement of their personal situation. However, Iraqis continue to be wary of the re-emergence of ISIS, particularly in Diyala, Kirkuk, and Salahaddin. Moreover, a few participants in Ninewa reported cases of child abduction for ransom. Some blame the lack of coordination among security actors for breaches in security, and are concerned that reverting to limited movement would impact their ability to keep jobs and provide for their families.



[Security] is more than good, and the policemen are always in the streets.

— *Sunni Arab woman, Anbar*

While men and women participants in focus group discussions in Mosul appreciated that security in their areas was improving and they felt safe, a Yazidi key informant from the Ninewa

Plains talked about the profound impact of ISIS on her community, including a lingering sense of insecurity and psychological trauma. She reported that the community is still suffering psychological trauma, which affects mostly women and children, “ISIS killed a lot of people, and that is why we still suffer from constant fear and anxiety. I, personally, know a lot of people that suffer from these issues. We are also scared of the Kurdistan Workers’ party (PKK) who are present on the [Sinjar] mountain. We are scared of any sudden attack that would make us run away, rob us, and displace us from our areas, just like it happened in the past.”



Thank God, the security situation is good. Three days ago we went out to take my daughter home at 2:00 AM and it was safe.

— *Sunni Arab woman, Ninewa*

Compared to an overall positive outlook in Anbar and Ninewa, views regarding security in Diyala and Salahaddin were rather mixed. Security surpassed public services as a top concern for both men and women in these two provinces. While some participants still appreciated the situation as improving, others were vocal about security violations such as killings and kidnappings stemming both from common criminality and on-going Islamic insurgency. A Sunni Arab

female participant from Salahaddin reported, “The security situation is negative and positive at the same time, because the area is not totally cleared from terrorism.” Similarly, a Sunni Arab woman from Diyala said that while safety was somewhat improving “murders and crimes are still happening.” Crop fires that engulfed many properties also caused concern for farmers and the public, as a Kurdish participant from Khanaqin reported.

Participants in Kirkuk raised strong concerns about the volatility of the security situation in their province and reported acts of violent extremism and kidnappings. Many noted that this is preventing them from leading a normal life; women’s freedom of movement, in particular, is affected. Participants blamed both the government and the security forces, including the Hash’d al Shaabi or Popular Mobilization Units (PMUs),³ for the deterioration of the security situation, accusing them of a lack of cooperation that drives instability. “The security situation is bad; we are suffering from increasing numbers of explosions and kidnappings of both men and women. The explosions happen regularly everywhere in Kirkuk,” as a woman participant explained.

In a context where women’s freedom of movement is already restricted, the lack of security is affecting women disproportionately, as a female key informant in Kirkuk illustrated, “The security situation is affecting [women] so much because their families are preventing them from going to their work due to that security situation, although you know it’s one of the women’s rights. The women have ambitions and want to serve the community, but their families are not letting them do so; this is causing a lot of disturbance and tension and will affect the whole family consequently.”

3 The Popular Mobilization Units (PMUs) is an umbrella organization of approximately 40 disparate armed groups primarily comprised of Shiite wings, in addition to some Christian, Sunni Muslim, Shabak, Turkmen, Yezidi, and other groups. PMUs rose to prominence in 2014 following a call-to-action from Grand Ayatollah Ali Al-Sistani to respond to ISIS’s sweeping military gains across the country.

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The security situation is the most important thing to me, even more important than food and a salary. I can eat only bread every day and settle with that just because the situation is safe now.

– Sunni Arab woman, Anbar

• • •

If it wasn't for improved security, nobody would have been able to leave their homes. People would have had to leave their jobs, their education, and life. And would have ended up in camps.

– Sunni Arab woman, Anbar

• • •

ISIS is still in the desert. The policeman would be near me, but if ISIS came, the policeman would run away.

– Sunni Arab man, Anbar

• • •

Now, the market of Baquba is closed after the dusk prayer, but if it was safer then the shops would stay open until midnight, and then more opportunities would be provided for young people.

– Sunni Arab man, Diyala

• • •

Yes, there are security violations, but they are reducing. Nevertheless, if they wanted to kill or kidnap someone, nobody will stand in the way, and until now there are rich and wealthy people who got kidnapped and have not been released until they paid the ransom.

– Sunni Arab woman, Diyala

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The security situation is not stable because the security services do not cooperate with each other; where the security situation was good previously, it is not anymore because each authority serves its own interests.

– *Sunni Arab woman, Kirkuk*

• • •

The security issues prevent me from going out. For example, if I have a job that requires me to stay until 8:00 PM or 9:00 PM, then I would not be able to stay late and I would lose this job because of the security situation.

– *Sunni Arab woman, Kirkuk*

• • •

If the Hash'd al Shaabi members are distributed everywhere, how did all these explosions happen on the same day and at the same time?

– *Kurdish woman, Kirkuk*

• • •

[Before] I didn't go alone anywhere, but now I visit my daughter in the North of Iraq on my own. If there was no security, would I go alone?! Of course not.

– *Sunni Arab woman, Ninewa*

• • •

If there's security, there will be reconstruction and job opportunities, while if there's no security there won't be opportunities.

– *Sunni Arab woman, Ninewa*

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I’m concerned about the current situation, fearing that ISIS could be back again, or fearing that we engage in a war with Iran. So, I don’t feel totally safe.

– Sunni Arab woman, Ninewa

• • •

The security situation is not good, since I can’t let my children go out on their own.

–Sunni Arab woman, Salahaddin

• • •

The security situation inside Tikrit is good, but it is unstable on the outskirts of Tikrit.

– Turkman woman, Salahaddin

• • •

I do not let my wife go alone to the market, fearing that she might get arrested.

– Sunni Arab man, Salahaddin

• • •

The improvement of security is for good for women, because they would be able to go out on their own, enjoy personal freedom, and realize their ambitions.

– Sunni Arab woman, Salahaddin

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2.6

TRUST IN SECURITY FORCES DRIVES COOPERATION AND STABILITY

Many of those who described the security situation as “stable” attributed it to the regained trust in security forces, pointing out that the conflict with ISIS helped improve significantly the relations between citizens and security providers. Increased cooperation between the various security forces, as well as between security forces and citizens, respect for the rule of law, and qualified security personnel and leadership would further contribute to consolidating public trust.

Some participants specifically mentioned the importance of a unitary command. And “this authority should have integrity and honesty, and their first concern should be protecting the area and providing security for the citizens,” said a Sunni Arab female participant from Kirkuk, while a Turkmen male participant from Kirkuk called for hiring “qualified people in the right place.”



The correct deployment of security forces is useful to the citizens, but incorrect deployment will harm the citizens and this means having plenty of checkpoints is not a good thing. Instead, dedicated phone numbers must be allocated to report anything. Now, reporting a certain incident can get you killed; this happened six months ago when a citizen reported someone for being involved with ISIS and he was assassinated the next day.

– Sunni Arab man, Salahaddin

Additionally, security checkpoints continue to be seen as a legitimate mechanism to keep communities safe. However, some participants voiced complaints about their ineffectiveness and suggested complementary measures, such as installing surveillance cameras in public places or phone numbers where citizens could report incidents. A Sunni Arab male participant from Ninewa called for instating a better control over security personnel, by issuing “regulations and penalties that would reduce cases of harassment and robbery.”

The police, especially the local police, and the army are generally viewed positively, even though some participants complained about their lack of responsiveness and inefficiency. For example, a woman in Diyala said, “Psychologically and mentally, I do not feel comfortable, and I am scared of everything and if someone attacks me, the police would not interfere.” While participants were generally reluctant to mention security groups they trusted, a few named Hash’d al Shaabi, Asayish, and Sahil Ninewa.

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We only trust people in our areas, but we have no faith in any security authority.

– *Kurdish woman, Kirkuk*

• • •

Each person must protect themselves through locking their house doors and report to the security forces when something happens.

– *Sunni Arab woman, Kirkuk*

• • •

The cooperation between the security forces and the citizens is important. If the citizens saw a certain situation, they would notify the security forces to take the necessary measures, but if the citizens do not cooperate with the security forces, things will become worse than before.

– *Shabak woman, Ninewa*

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Kirkuk participants, in particular, voiced distrust of any security forces. Anecdotes of negative interactions with security forces and a feeling that one can only trust those in his immediate proximity—oneself, family, and friends—are indicative of an in-group withdrawal caused by the protracted local ethno-sectarian conflict. However, there is a broad recognition that citizens themselves bear the responsibility to remain vigilant and to collaborate with the security forces to ensure that breaches are prevented or addressed effectively.

2.7 VIEWS TOWARD THE JUSTICE SYSTEM ARE MIXED

Some participants perceive that justice is accessible to all, that there is no discrimination, and a fair distribution of justice. Others, however, hold opposite views and report issues with due process. Most complain that trials can take a long time just to get an arbitrary solution in the end, which many suspect



Because of the traditions of society, awareness sessions must be conducted so that women can know their rights, have access to courts and reach justice, but it's good to mention that there are some improvements. For example, the percentage of women who were accessing the courts used to be 20%, but now citizens are aware and educated.

— *Shia man, Salahaddin*

is due to corruption. Regardless of their positive or negative sentiments towards the justice system in general, participants largely agreed that nepotism and bribery plague the system—those who pay money or have the right connections are in an advantageous position when in front of a judge. While participants agreed that combating nepotism in the justice system is important, there was a feeling of helplessness about how this could be achieved.

At the same time, conservative traditions that deem it inappropriate for women to approach courts and a general fear of harassment discourage women from pursuing justice, even if they have a legal capacity to do so. To chip away at restrictive gender norms and improve women's access to justice, participants suggest public campaigns to raise awareness of women's rights. To be effective, these campaigns would need to target men and community influencers, too.

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Processes are easily completed in one or two days whether they were for men or women.

– *Turkmen Woman, Salahaddin*

• • •

There are no obstacles for women or men, but because of customs and traditions, women are prevented from going to court in some families.

– *Shia man, Salahaddin*

• • •

I cannot reach the judge. There should be a complaints office.

– *Sunni Arab woman, Anbar*

• • •

I wanted to obtain an official document in one of the government departments, but it was not completed because I did not pay bribes. Then I gave it to my relative who knows someone in that department, so he finished it for me without even going to the department.

– *Shabak woman, Ninewa*

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The situation right now is that when a person is arrested, even if he’s an ISIS affiliate, he can pay money to be released.

– *Sunni Arab Male, Ninewa*

• • •

Some people were arrested for eight months because of similarity of names. So, how can I feel safe while I don’t trust the security forces or the judges? Once, we were seven people who testified in court that one of the defendants was innocent. Yet, he was executed.

– *Sunni Arab man, Salahaddin*

• • •

Recently, a guy who lived in my area was murdered and they couldn’t find the criminal. In the end, the security forces claimed that he committed suicide although his hands were tied back... As simple citizens, we know that it is a murder because he was tied and shot in the back of his head, so where is his right?

– *Sunni Arab woman, Kirkuk*

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2.8

SOCIAL JUSTICE COULD CONSOLIDATE A SENSE OF COHESION AND SHARED IDENTITY

Ethno-sectarian relations continue to improve as the conflict with ISIS unified the country. Participants reported citizens living in harmony; however, some felt that their values have been lost in the past years, causing a withdrawal to their in-groups. Additionally, some blame politicians for sowing divisions along sectarian lines for their own benefit and connect political sectarianism to nepotism and other forms of corruption.

To consolidate a sense of social cohesion and national unity, participants called for a fair and equal treatment of all citizens. Public dialogue sessions that bring together members of different sects could also reinforce shared and inclusive identities. Views about who should lead reconciliation efforts are mixed, though. Some considered that political parties need to reconcile first, and called for a more prominent role of the government in the process, while others preferred that tribes and clans had a leading role.



The problem is not with Sunni and Shia but with the groups and parties that represent them. And here I mean the Sunni and Shia Islamic parties. So, when we talk about Diyala, it is considered to be predominantly Sunni, but the Shia militias and parties are dominant. Also the governor is Shia, and the chief of security committee is Shia, too. The problem is that when the Shia political parties took over, the corruption appeared.

– Sunni Arab woman, Diyala

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[In Diyala] there is a level of cohesion and commitment between citizens that is unparalleled in Iraq. [...] We have Sabian, Christian, Arab, Kurd, Sunni, and Shia, all living together and marrying each other.

– *Kurdish man, Diyala*

• • •

Previously there was harmony in society and even marriages were happening between Sunni, Shia, Kurd, and Arab, as well as between Muslims and Christians. Now we see every group has shrunk around itself out of fear of the others. Even within the same ethnicity we see real problems because of the weakening of values and principles. Before there were common traditions and customs, and the society was like the colors of a mosaic. Before, we wouldn't feel these differences, but now, after ISIS, a huge crack has occurred; the values and the religious principles are weakened, and the trust is not as it was before.

– *Sunni Arab man, Anbar*

• • •

Both sectarianism and racism exist; the governor is Arab and he belongs to the Al-Jubouri tribe; the police chief is from a certain sect; and an office manager belongs to another sect and so on. You know that if one ethnicity was appointed to a certain position then another ethnicity would be dissatisfied with this.

– *Sunni Arab Man, Kirkuk*

• • •

We always feel isolated because, as you know, we are non-Muslims; and we do not feel any sense of unity with the Muslims.

– *Yezidi woman, Ninewa*

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Treat the citizens in the camps well and equally.

– *Turkmen Woman, Kirkuk*

• • •

There are no conflict cases between [people living in an IDP camp]. They currently live in harmony because they have been living with each other for more than a year, and they have become like one family. Despite being a camp, it has become a small city, with all life necessities, so they live in cohesion with each other, established relationships, and more than one marriage happened in the camp.

– *Sunni Arab woman, Anbar*

• • •

Absolutely not, [the provincial council] doesn't have a role [in reconciliation].

– *Sunni Arab man, Anbar*

• • •

Conduct a public conference between the dignitaries and Sheikhs of the areas surrounding Al-Hamdaniya in order to strengthen unity and peaceful coexistence, and return what has been stolen to the residents or to the district council or to the church, because this helps people regain trust.

– *Christian Woman, Ninewa*

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3.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Restore trust between the local government and citizens.

The lack of trust in local government, coupled with high demand for services, jobs, and curbing corruption can have deep social, political, and security consequences. On the short term, an increased dissatisfaction with the performance of the government can deepen the gap between citizens and the political elite, leading to social unrest and low turnout in the upcoming provincial elections, slated for April 1, 2020. On the longer term, the sentiment that the state is unable to deliver on people's everyday needs, might extend to democracy being perceived as an ineffective form of government. This would give way to antidemocratic figures to put forward demagogic proposals in order to win votes. There is a broad sense that citizens have a limited role in the public decision-making processes and that this situation should change. Local governments should leverage this widespread appetite for more involvement of citizen's in the public affairs of the governorate.

- **Establish formal mechanisms to communicate with constituents.** Where not in place yet, set up constituent relations offices across the province and widely advertise their scope and working hours.
- **Put in place an effective system to process requests from citizens and increase transparency about the progress of solving these cases.** Complement physical offices with toll-free numbers for citizens, and optimize the council's social media communication.
- **Improve communication about public policies.** Provincial council's committees and leadership should develop communication plans to increase public awareness of their policy priorities, and conduct site visits and town-hall meetings as regular feedback mechanisms. Periodically, organize issue-based public consultations on matters of importance to citizens.
- **Align the local government's agenda with citizen's priorities.** Local government should work to improve access to services, increase transparency and accountability to limit corruption and increase performance of public administration, and ensure fair distribution of services across different ethno-sectarian groups.

Provide opportunities for women's participation in local governance.

Women remain marginalized in the Iraqi society, but there is high demand for more representation in decision making.

- Create avenues for women's participation in public consultations, in order to better identify and address issues that affect their lives.
- Normalize women's presence in public spaces and especially in government buildings; put in place anti-harassment policies for public employees, make spaces safe, and ensure that premises and office hours accommodate women's needs.

Support non-governmental organizations.

Organizations providing relief, livelihood support, vocational training, and capacity building address the needs of some of the most vulnerable groups. Local government could support local NGOs by identifying at-risk individuals and groups, and facilitating access to these beneficiaries, including by simplifying procedures travel from one province to another.

ANNEX:

RECRUITMENT CRITERIA

FGD #	Location	Type	Gender	Age	Urban/ Rural	Ethnicity/ Religion	Education
1	Diyala	Not displaced / returnee	Female	30-45	Urban	Sunni Arab	Secondary and above
2	Diyala	Not displaced / returnee	Male	30-45	Urban	Sunni Arab	Primary/ Intermediate/ Secondary
3	Ninewa	Not displaced / returnee	Female	45-65	Urban	Sunni Arab	Primary/ intermediate
4	Ninewa	Not displaced / returnee	Male	30-45	Urban	Sunni Arab	Intermediate/ Secondary/ University
5	Anbar	Not displaced / returnee	Female	45-65	Urban	Sunni Arab	Intermediate/ Secondary/ University
6	Anbar	Not displaced / returnee	Male	20-30	Urban	Sunni Arab	Primary/ intermediate
7	Kirkuk	Not displaced / returnee	Female	20-30	Urban	Sunni Arab	Primary/ intermediate
8	Kirkuk	Not displaced / returnee	Female	30-45	Urban	Kurd	Intermediate/ Secondary/ University
9	Salahaddin	Not displaced / returnee	Female	20-30	Urban	Sunni Arab	Intermediate/ Secondary/ University
10	Salahaddin	Not displaced / returnee	Male	45-65	Urban	Sunni Arab	Primary/ intermediate

KII #	Location	Type of participant	Gender	Age	Urban/ Rural	Ethnicity/ Religion	Education
1	Erbil	Living or working in Bahraka IDP camp	Female	35-65	Urban/ Rural	Sunni Arab from Ninewa	flexibly
2	Erbil	Living or working in Bahraka IDP camp	Male	35-65	Urban/ Rural	Sunni Arab from Ninewa	flexibly
3	Anbar	Living or working in in Amriyat al Fallujah/Bzebz IDP camps	Male	35-65	Urban/ Rural	Sunni Arab	flexibly
4	Anbar	Living or working in Habbaniya IDP camp	Male	35-65	Urban/ Rural	Sunni Arab	flexibly
5	Ninewa	Returnee / Not displaced	Female	35-65	Urban/ Rural	Yezidi (Sinjar)	flexibly
6	Ninewa	Returnee / Not displaced	Female	35-65	Urban/ Rural	Christian (Hamdaniya)	flexibly
7	Ninewa	Returnee / Not displaced	Female	35-65	Urban/ Rural	Shabak (Hamdaniya)	flexibly
8	Salahaddin	Returnee / Not displaced	Male	35-65	Urban/ Rural	Shia Arab (Tuz Khurmatu)	flexibly
9	Salahaddin	Returnee / Not displaced	Female	35-65	Urban/ Rural	Turkmen	flexibly
10	Diyala	Returnee / Not displaced	Male	35-65	Urban/ Rural	Kurd (Khanaqin)	flexibly
11	Kirkuk	Returnee / Not displaced	Female	35-65	Urban/ Rural	Turkmen	flexibly
12	Kirkuk	Returnee / Not displaced	Male	35-65	Urban/ Rural	Turkmen	flexibly
13	Kirkuk	Returnee / Not displaced	Male	35-65	Urban/ Rural	Kurd	flexibly
14	Kirkuk	Returnee / Not displaced	Male	35-65	Urban/ Rural	Sunni Arab	flexibly

This report was developed under the
program *Supporting Gender-Sensitive
Local Governance through Women's
Advisory Boards* funded by the
Government of Canada

