



UNDP assist Al-Anbar with Development Planning

The United Nations Development Programme, the largest UN agency in Iraq, is assisting Al-Anbar Governorate with development planning, to ensure its strategic plans support the Iraqi National Development Plan for the 2010-14 period.

As part of its support to Al-Anbar, UNDP convened a workshop during October 8-12, 2009, with the governorate's most senior elected officials together with administrators, academics and community leaders to review the development plan for the coming five years

The workshop was attended by the Chairman of Al-Anbar Governorate Council, Governor of Al-Anbar, heads of Governorate Council Committees, senior administrators and technical directors, and representatives from Al-Anbar Investment Commission, as well as officials from the Ministry of Planning and Development Coordination.

"We are grateful to the United Nations Development Programme for supporting us in our planning, and for our planners to learn by doing and transfer of foreign experience. These are very professional matters and they need focused work," Qasim Mohammed Abid Al-Fahadawi, Governor of Al-Anbar, said at the opening of the workshop.

He also called on the international community to continue to support Al-Anbar to make the governorate a historical positive example of recovery.

"I convey my gratitude to UNDP for convening this workshop. Al-Anbar Governorate has for a long time been neglected, and we are looking for the UN to expand its sacred task as it has always been present in spite of a harsh security situation," Dr. Jasim Muhammad Hamad Hussein al-Halbusi, Chairman of Al-Anbar's Governorate Council, said.

"In Al-Anbar there are many resources, starting with human capital, natural resources and a long history, which can be put to best use with proper planning. Now we are diagnosing the present while looking ahead to the future, making strides toward development and attracting donors and investors," he added.



Following recent legal changes, the local planning function was transferred to the governorates by the Law of Governorates Not Organized into a Region, which came into effect when the newly-elected Governorate Council convened in April 2009.

The governorate plans are part of the National Development Plan 2010-2014 initiative, carried out by Iraq's Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation, making them a joint nation-wide effort. As the UN's global development network, it is UNDP's role to assist Iraq's governorates and national authorities with their development planning.

Al-Anbar's development plan has been prepared by the governorate's Development Coordination Committee with UNDP support, and workshop participants also studied ways to sustain the comprehensive planning and effective implementation of the governorate's development programme.

"UNDP is a long-term partner and friend of the Iraqi people, and we have supported Iraq's development since 1976," Elballa Hagona, Deputy Country Director and Head of Programmes with UNDP-Iraq, said.

"Key here is our support in the drafting and implementation of Development Plans, at both the governorate and national levels, to ensure better coordination and utilization of Iraq's budgets and resources, as well as the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals," he added.

UNDP is currently implementing four key activities in Al-Anbar with a total value of 40 million US dollars, including the rehabilitation of Ramadi hospital, conversion of Fallujah hospital, assistance to the governorate's strategic planning, and development of renewable energy sources.

"Al-Anbar and Iraq have many resources. This not the least concerns a great oasis of knowledge and learning - elected representatives, officials, community leaders, academics and professionals - and UNDP is honored to work with these in promoting Iraq's development," Mr. Hagona noted.

For editors:

As the largest UN agency in Iraq, UNDP has over 140 national and international staff based at its headquarters in Amman, Jordan, and in Baghdad, Erbil, Basrah,



Ramadi and Najaf. With an annual budget of some 85 million US dollars, UNDP has delivered almost 500 million US dollars in humanitarian and development aid to Iraq since 2004.

UNDP's role is to support the government and people of Iraq in their transition towards reconciliation, peace and stability by focusing on the areas of governance, poverty alleviation, economic recovery, mine action and the environment. Currently the agency implements over 90 projects across the country.

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