

Promoting Dialogue and Participation (PDP)

Innovating Inclusive Dialogue and Participation for Socio-Economic Transformation

The challenge

Iraq is faced with pressing challenges across its socio-political and economic realms, exacerbated by factors such as economic mismanagement, political fragmentation, corruption, climate change and the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The unrest that began in October 2019, particularly driven by the discontent of the youth, underscores the urgent need for reform. Demands include an end to corruption and abuses of power, improved access to basic services, reduced social inequality and enhanced prospects for the future.

Recognising these imperatives, the government has outlined comprehensive reforms in the National Development Plan and Iraqi Vision 2030. These range from ensuring fundamental services like water and electricity to fostering social cohesion and empowering the youth. However, progress in implementation has been sluggish, hampered by deep political divisions, inadequate dialogue between civil society and government officials, and a lack of effective mechanisms for collaboration. Consequently, substantive, and inclusive agreements on necessary reforms remain elusive.

Our approach

The project contributes to improving the overall environment for dialogue and participation in Iraq. It intends to achieve this by initiating and supporting innovative and inclusive mechanisms aiming at developing reform proposals across various socio-economic thematic areas. The project adopts an inclusive approach by bringing together government, civil society, and academia stakeholders at both local and national levels. Emphasis is placed on actively involving women and youth.

The goal is to establish inclusive participation processes as a fundamental element in decision-making, advisory roles, and fostering sustainable conditions for dialogue and engagement.

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| Project name | Promoting Dialogue and Participation in Iraq (PDP) |
| Commissioned by | German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) |
| Project regions | Iraq |
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Various pilot dialogue initiatives have been undertaken by implementing partners at both national and local levels. These initiatives encompass a range of activities, from dialogue sessions involving government officials, and stakeholders from civil society, and academia, to local dialogue efforts in different regions.

Additionally, the project promotes engagement by facilitating interaction between citizens and the government. Capacity building measures, such as workshops and training sessions on dialogue, communication, and participation, target both governmental institutions and civil society organizations.

Furthermore, the project aims to share lessons learned and experiences from other countries and projects, fostering knowledge exchange and networking to assist stakeholders in



Photo: Iraqi youths during a dialogue session implemented by a partner organisation

defining nationwide framework conditions for dialogue and participation.

The benefits

The project creates an environment conducive to open and inclusive dialogue, essential for fostering enduring societal transformations and enhancing relations and collaboration between the state and society.

The project has prioritised integrating the perspectives of Iraq's youth through Youth Dialogues. Young individuals from various regions have been trained as facilitators to conduct dialogues on reform proposals among their peers. Their insights have been consolidated into a community-driven report, presented to both local and national authorities.

Diverse participatory and inclusive dialogue and training initiatives empower participants to enhance their skills and resources in organising, leading and engaging in inclusive dialogues. Citizens gain a platform to voice their needs and concerns, while governmental decision-makers are equipped to engage with civil society and to make more informed choices for locally driven reforms.

National Working Group was supported by the PDP project to facilitate the formulation of a draft National Strategy for Dialogue and Participation. Members are staff from government units, think tanks and universities, and civil society organisations.

Additionally, the project collaborates with national partners to develop curricula and conduct training sessions, in order to bolster the capacity of government officials and civil society in dialogue processes.



Photos: expert from the IDOS Institute from Germany holding a presentation on social contracts for representatives from government, civil society and academia who subsequently discussed the concept's relevance for participatory processes in Iraq.

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