OXFAM

A FRESH ANALYSIS OF THE DISASTER MANAGEMENT CAPACITY IN IRAQ

Iraqi Local Organizations and State Agencies' Capacity to Manage Humanitarian Responses

Ali AlAssaf

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CONTENTS

ACRONYMS

ACF	Action Against Hunger
BRHA	Board of Relief and Humanitarian Affairs
CBO	Community Based Organization
CHS	Core Humanitarian Standard
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DIBs	Disputed Internal Boundaries
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EFSL	Emergency Food Security and Livelihood
GOI	Government of Iraq
HAP	Human Accelerated Performance
HI	Handicap International
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
HUCOCA	Humanitarian Country Capacity Analysis
ICRC	International Committee of Red Cross
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
IraqNHDR	National Human Development Report – Iraq
JCC	Joint Crisis Coordination Centre
JCMC	Joint Coordination and Monitoring Centre
KRG	Kurdistan Region Government
LNGOs	Local Non-Governmental Organization
MC	Mercy Corps
MoMD	Ministry of Migration and Displacement
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organization
NOC	National Operation Center
NPA	Norwegian People's Aid
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
PM	Prime Minister
SC	Save the Children
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The current crisis context in Iraq, in which 3.1 million people are internally displaced fleeing ISIS and their efforts to reclaim areas they had taken, is further exacerbated by the fact that Iraq's development indicators consistently rank the lowest among Middle East countries. Around one third of the population is in need, with more than 18.7% of Iraqis living below the poverty line and lacking access to basic services, education, nutrition and healthcare. Nearly one third of the population lacks access to publicly supplied or safe well drinking water. Some 14% of the population is vulnerable to food deprivation.

Compounding the country's inability to respond to such needs is the fact that Iraq also suffers from a lack of good governance and accountability and high rates of corruption. The current conflict, which has brought the territorial disputes between the GoI and KRG to the fore, coupled with the panoply of armed actors contributing to removing ISIS, further heightens insecurity and limits the ability to provide for those most in need. Inadequate and unreliable service delivery, weak provision of public services, deteriorated infrastructure and different delineations of administrative borders between central and regional governments have influenced all aspects of life in Iraq.

In terms of local non-governmental actors, civil society has only recently begun to take humanitarian and emergency response work into consideration. Legally-recognized civil society has been present in the northern area since 1992, but only since 2003 in the central and southern areas'

Given all of this, Oxfam Iraq has sought to analyze the humanitarian capacities of Iraqi government structures and local civil society organizations to meet needs in this current crisis as well as increase its preparedness to take on future emergencies, conflict-related or not. "This report is based on desk-based research and field visits carried out in 2016, in order to assess the current humanitarian country capacity of Iraq". These activities helped to 1) provide a fresh analysis of currently existing disaster management capacity available in Iraq, 2) review the capacity of local structures including government structures and role and attribution of civil society organizations in these structures, 3) provide a set of suggested key indicators to capture and measure progress achieved in national and local capacity to manage future humanitarian responses and 4) provide suggestions and recommendations with the objective to validate and enrich the fresh analysis and provide a platform for action planning to move forward. This work revealed that while the Kurdistan Region had stronger

governmental and civil society structures than Federal Iraq, in both instances, governmental structures could do little more than coordinate activities and the country's Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Framework, and ensuing legislation is reactive and fragmented, leaving Iraq ill-prepared and equipped to respond to crises. At the civil society level, most organizations are not humanitarian in focus but have taken on this work given the need in the country recently and the funding available for it – thus organizations are donor rather than mission driven. This is not to say however that there are not dedicated local humanitarian organizations emerging who need greater support and encouragement to link together to strategize, advocate for their needs, and take their place in leading humanitarian and emergency response in the country. There is also a greater role for the private sector to play, in a more transparent manner to further encourage philanthropy and volunteerism in relation to crisis.

The following are general recommendations for taking forward the critical aim of creating a robust emergency and humanitarian response capacity at all levels in Iraq that is nationally and locally owned and led:

• The humanitarian and emergency response system in Iraq needs to shift from an internationally driven structure to one that is locally-owned and led, to coordinate and deliver both local and international assistance to those most in need.

• All humanitarian actors should support the local desire for greater capacity and professionalism while also encouraging the government to provide a legal framework and resources to ensure the following actions at national, regional and provincial levels:

a) Adherence to humanitarian minimum standards to enable higher quality and accountable responses

b) A focus on resilience building and a bottom-up approach for strengthening capacity.

• State agencies should be strengthened immediately to take full leadership responsibility in the provision of the humanitarian and emergency response, including coordinating assistance and ensuring quality standards.

• The framing of the humanitarian mandate in Iraq should shift from the current "life saving" model to a "live in dignity" one where social rehabilitation, resilience, and peacebuilding measures are undertaken in parallel to humanitarian delivery of survival assistance.

• Public resources related to logistical support and supplies should be made available for LNGOs to access during times of crisis in coordination with key humanitarian stakeholders in the country who have significant capacity in this regard.

• Efforts should be made to provide more space for LNGO participation in any humanitarian platform (e.g. using the local language instead of English and enriching the agenda of these platforms with discussion of substantive issues affecting LNGOs in providing humanitarian assistance).

• The private sector should be encouraged to effectively contribute to humanitarian response needs through productive private-public partnerships to develop infrastructure projects, tax exemptions for corporate philanthropy and giving, legislation to support youth entrepreneurs, etc.

• To further promote philanthropy and volunteerism in the country, a database for public participation in humanitarian response should be established to help private citizens and companies find ways to contribute time and/or resources to local efforts.

From this work, it is clear that Oxfam is well-positioned to spearhead efforts, in close collaboration with partners, in localizing humanitarian leadership. From interviews with local authorities and NGOs it is clear that the organization is trusted to help in supporting and raising local voices to take their rightful place in humanitarian and emergency response in the country, as follows:

• Oxfam should widely communicate fresh analysis in Iraq to different humanitarian stakeholders for more development and input.

• Oxfam should play a leading role in facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogues, technical exchanges, and capacity building for local partners (state actors, LNGOs, civil society, youth groups and humanitarian based networks).

• Oxfam should advocate for promoting humanitarian professional standards and good practices across all local actors to benefit disaster management capacity. This includes investing time and advocacy efforts to developing a sustainable approach to stronger collaboration between international, national, and local humanitarian stakeholders.

• Oxfam should establish a working group made up of LNGOs to help them develop strategies for a local humanitarian agenda and facilitate convening regular meetings with and campaigns for UN, INGOs, and regional and federal authorities to adopt this new, locally-led agenda.

1. CONTEXT AND PURPOSE

Iraq is composed of two territories with different political systems. The central and southern parts of the country (14 governorates) are controlled by the Government of Iraq (GoI) and the northern area (3 governorates) is controlled by the semi-autonomous Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). The split in control over these areas across Iraq is not always clear cut, particularly within the so-called disputed internal boundaries (DIBs), where both entities lay claims to the land based on demography. The governorate of Kirkuk is among the DIBs.

The mass movement of people as a result of the current conflict as well as the positioning of both GoI and KRG troops working together to fight ISIS, makes resolving these issues all the more pressing and all the more complicated. A further complexity is that despite the different political structures, both governance systems are heavily dependent on political parties whose rivalries have stalemated both governments. Thus, instability coupled with insecurity hinder access in many parts of the GoI's territories and in DIBs where one of the largest displacement crises in the world is currently taking place, making it difficult to implement and monitor humanitarian responses.

Furthermore, civil society has only recently begun to take humanitarian and emergency response work into consideration. Legally-recognized civil society in Iraq did not appear in central and south Iraq until 2003 while in Kurdistan NGOs were set-up as early as 1992. The authoritarian Baath regime banned any form of civic organizing. However, other forms of charity or philanthropy, based on religious and tribal structures were tolerated to assist people in need. The international community supported the development of NGOs aimed at the promotion of democracy, peace-building, and conflict resolution. Despite the multiple sectarian clashes between 2003 and 2011, little support was provided to develop local humanitarian capacity.

Other groups such as tribal and religious structures are better prepared than NGOs to be first responders to the current humanitarian crisis hitting the country. In addition, the ethnic and sectarian divide across society and local authorities has an impact on the way the current humanitarian response has been set up. The NGOs who are able to remain neutral, impartial, non-partisan and non-sectarian continue to provide services to communities but face considerable challenges in raising their credibility and profile.

Given the severity of this situation then, the main focus of this report is an analysis of the humanitarian capacities of Iraqi government structures and local civil society organizations to meet needs in this current crisis as well as its preparedness to take on future emergencies, whether conflict-related or not. While the report will explain the differences in the various authorities' abilities relating to humanitarian assistance and emergency response as well as their level of acceptance nationally and internationally, it does not seek to validate any statehood claims of any actors.

This report is guided by the change goal statement of Oxfam International's strategic plan: "National state institutions and civil society in the most crisis prone/affected countries, supported by the international community, are able to deliver high quality, impartial and independent assistance to those in need, and resilience to increasingly frequent natural disasters and conflict is strengthened through improved preparedness and risk reduction". The analysis presented herein provides an evidence base for guiding further efforts in this regard to contributing to achieving this goal in Iraq.

The research and analysis consisted of a desk review of relevant documents, field visits to target areas including Baghdad, Kirkuk, Dohuk, and Erbil governorates, and 27 interviews and meetings with key humanitarian stakeholders, both governmental and civil society (see Annex 1). This work was carried out between June and August 2016 and sought to assess Iraq's humanitarian country capacity and gauge the extent to which local actors are leading the humanitarian agenda in the current response.

The rationale in selecting the four abovementioned target areas is because these areas have dealt with the brunt of the current humanitarian crisis in terms of governance and number of displaced coming in, and they represent three areas of governance, GoI (Baghdad), DIBs (Kirkuk), and KRG (Dohuk and Erbil). This work benefitted greatly from discussions with senior government officials across these areas at national, regional, and provincial levels as well as inputs from civil society including LNGOs, think tanks, universities and more informal structures, including youth groups. That being said, triangulating data provided by state agencies and LNGOs was a challenge due to lack of available information.

These activities helped to 1) provide a fresh analysis of the currently existing disaster management capacity available in Iraq, 2) review the capacity of local structures including government structures and the role and attribution of civil society organizations in these structures, 3) provide a set of suggested key indicators to capture and measure progress achieved in national and local capacity to manage future humanitarian responses and 4) provide suggestions and recommendations with the objective of validating and enriching the fresh analysis and providing a platform for action planning to move forward.

The Humanitarian Country Capacities Analysis methodology guided this work and is described as follows:

Plan of action

Discussion workshop

Report recommendations for local and international humanitarian actors

Objectives to develop existing potentialities and how cover gaps (Key indicators' setting)

Assessment of local humanitarian capacities

Consultation with key humanitarian actors (Governement, Civil Society)

Quick review of problem to be addressed

2. TYPOLOGY OF HUMANITARIAN ACTORS

There are many different humanitarian actors working in Iraq, some with a purely humanitarian mandate and role, while others focus on humanitarian work as part of their broader responsibilities or because of the current circumstances in the country. Some are value or mission driven and others are donor driven. The below table shows the typologies of the key humanitarian actors in Iraq including those actors involved in the management of and influence over the humanitarian response.

Typology	Organization(s)	Mandate / Responsibility	Presence	Relevance
GoI	GOI Ministries, Joint Coordination and Monitoring Center (JCMC), National Operation Center ,PM's Crises Cell, Provincial Emergency Cells and Provincial Authorities	Within the responsibilities of the State: delivery, disaster risk management and coordination.	Central and South governorates and some DIBs	High in political terms. Very limited in coordination and delivery capacity.
KRG	Kurdistan Ministries, Joint Coordination Center (JCC), Disaster Management Committees on Provincial level, Committees and Governmental Authorities.	Within the responsibilities of the regional government: delivery, disaster risk management and coordination.	All Kurdistan region and some DIBs.	High in political terms. Medium in delivery terms. High in coordination terms.
UN agencies	UNICEF, UNOCHA, UNHCR, WFP, WHO, etc.	Under UN mandate. Provide overall humanitarian aid and humanitarian coordination across Iraq	In all regions with the exception of areas of armed conflicts	Very high. They lead the humanitarian agenda, influencing by funding key implementation partners (INGOs and LNGOs).
LNGOs	See Annex 1 for full list.	The bulk of these organizations had development and peacebuilding mandates. Very few with exclusive humanitarian mandates.	Across the country.	Low in political terms as well as in coordination. Medium in delivery terms.
INGOs	Oxfam, NRC, DRC, MC, SC, ACF, HI, NPA, etc.	Humanitarian and development mandate. Presence dominated by humanitarian mandated agencies.	Across the country, except for areas of open armed conflict.	High in humanitarian terms. Medium in delivery. Low in coordination and political terms.
Red Crescent and ICRC	Iraqi Red Crescent and ICRC	Both have a humanitarian mandate and they work in partnership with no clear division of the roles of the two organizations and ways of intervening.	Across the country, except for areas of open armed conflict.	IRCS is heavily connected to the GoI while the ICRC works to preserve its neutrality and impartiality. Both are high in humanitarian access and medium in delivery.

Typology	Organization(s)	Mandate / Responsibility	Presence	Relevance
Faith-Based Organizations	Sheikhs and Supreme clerics	Support people around Iraq based on their faith/doctrine.	Areas of influence of religious groups.	Very relevant within their communities. High delivery. No coordination.
Donor agencies	USAID, ECHO, Embassies, etc.	Supporting humanitarian agencies.	Mainly in Baghdad and Erbil, some presence elsewhere.	Highly influential on INGO and LNGO programmes through funding conditionality. Play key role in influencing government agencies.
Social Media	Mainly Facebook. Also Instagram and some blogs.	Provide information.	National, regional, provincial and district level.	Mainly used by civil society as an instrument for campaigning, early warning and advocacy.

Play key role in holding decision makers accountable. |
| **Private sector** | Oil and telecom investors and contractors. Private small and medium businesses run by individuals. | Charitable arm of companies. | Across the country. | Not reliable or accountable. No cooperation with civil society |

3. HUMANITARIAN CONTEXT

The current crisis context in Iraq, in which 3.1 million people are internally displaced fleeing ISIS and their efforts to reclaim areas they had taken, is further exacerbated by the fact that Iraq's development indicators consistently rank lowest among Middle East countries. Around one third of the population is in need, with more than 18.7% of Iraqis living below the poverty line and lacking access to basic services, education, nutrition and healthcare. Nearly one third of the population lacks access to publicly supplied or safe well drinking water. Some 14% of the population is vulnerable to food deprivation.

Compounding the country's ability to respond to such need is the fact that Iraq also suffers from a lack of good governance and accountability and high rates of corruption. The current conflict, which has brought the territorial disputes between the GoI and KRG on territory to the fore, coupled with the panoply of armed actors contributing to removing ISIS, further heightens insecurity and limits the ability to provide for those most in need. Inadequate and unreliable service delivery, weak provision of public services, deteriorated infrastructure and different delineations of administrative borders between central and regional governments has influenced all aspects of life in Iraq.

Below are some critical points that highlight this fact in relation to the provision of services and emergency responses:

- Iraq is a fragile country by and large and it's Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Framework and resulting legislation is reactive and fragmented, leaving the country ill-prepared and equipped to respond to crises.

- In relation to this, there are multiple state agencies (at federal, regional, and provincial levels) dealing with different aspects of disaster and emergency response but they have not been able to establish inter-agency coordination bodies, due in part to lack of clarity in relation to the decentralization of authority, and they have been unable to promote the role of civil society in providing essential support and responding to crises, in part because the authorities do not recognize their role as key actors.

- Furthermore, some state agencies that have a dominant role in the humanitarian agenda in the country are politically motivated actors, rather than humanitarian-driven.

- The establishment of LNGOs in Iraq took off in response to international support and funding from 2003 onwards. As a result of this influx of money, many of these LNGOs were not based on a clear mission and community-based need to serve, but rather were donor-driven.

- Aside from conflict, the few major emergencies in Iraq have been either seasonal floods or epidemic diseases, no instances of which have been particularly drawn out, which has also made it difficult for LNGOs that are focused on humanitarian need to maintain regular interest, funding, and focus.

- Politically affiliated LNGOs are more capable, with diversity of funding (local and international) and the ability to coordinate with other humanitarian actors. Doctrine driven LNGOs with similar capacity are not however able to access such coordination with others and often act alone.

- LNGOs, even the larger ones in the country, are unable to expand given their often unclear mandate, lack of knowledge management, risk management, programme design skill, and an inability to strategically fundraise.

- The weak private sector in Iraq, gaps in legislation around philanthropy, and lack of trust have hindered LNGOs ability to initiate solid partnerships in this sector to further their work.

4. HUMANITARIAN CAPACITY

In carrying out a more detailed contextual analysis of humanitarian capacity, the following areas were examined: society strength; state and politics; and infrastructure for both the Federal territories and the Kurdistan region.

A	Society Strength	Content
A.1	**Strength and power of civil society**	• Typology of civil society organizations (CSOs). • Structure of CSOs: Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), NGOs, religious organizations, sports organizations etc. • Influence of CSOs in politics, economy and social life. • Level of interaction between CSOs. • Level of interaction of CSOs with society in general. • Level of Interaction of national CSOs with regional and international organizations.
A.2	**Human development (Education, Health, Income)**	• Level of education of the population (gender disaggregated data). • Health services and facilities. • Income per capita. • Livelihood and income vulnerability. • Cultural heritage and use of it. • Customary law.
A.3	**Human rights respect (Violations of human rights, gender equity and justice, respect of minorities)**	• Societal knowledge of human rights. • Human rights in practice from customary and common law. • Gender justice, societal gender roles and rights. • Inclusion of minorities. • Knowledge of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and respect for it.
A.4	**Humanitarian access (in respect of Humanitarian agencies, INGOs and LNGOs)**	• IHL is respected in practice. • INGOs and LNGOs have unimpeded access to communities. • INGOs and LNGOs can carry out impartial humanitarian work. • Humanitarian workers and their equipment are respected.
B	State and Politics	Content
B.1	**Governance and Institutional structures**	• What is the legitimacy of the government? • Is there a government present across all territory? Is there a democratic base? • Does the government benefit from regional or international recognition?
B.2	**Public administration efficiency, delivery, reliability, and accessibility**	• What service delivers public administration? • Service quality and outreach. • Can all citizens access public services, (geographical and economic access)? Is there a big gap between urban and rural coverage?

		• Is there any mechanism to influence improvement of public services? • Is public administration supported with a fair tax system to subsidize basic social services?
B.3	**Rule of law**	• Is there a separation of powers (legislative, executive, and judiciary)? • Is there a distinction between civil, police and military roles? • Is rule of law is generally respected by society? • Is there a solid body of law? (including customary law) • Is the Rule of law applied across all areas?
B.4	**International legitimacy**	• Extension and quality of diplomatic relations. • Engagement in regional and international fora. • Presence of foreign embassies in the country. • Presence of regional bodies. • UN presence and relationship. • INGO presence and active role.
C	**Country Infrastructure and Politics**	**Content**
C.1	**National infrastructure: communications, transport, and services**	• Level of country road access. • Communication networks, telephone, internet, commercial radio systems, TV, newspapers. • National vehicle fleet, quality, and accessibility. • Heavy trucking availability. • Public transport for individuals, network, and quality. • Other transport infrastructure: railways, airports, harbours, etc. • Health and education infrastructure.
C.2	**National civil protection services (DRR infrastructure, emergency response units, etc.)**	• Administration entities able to deal with disaster response. Policy to mobilize resources at highest level to deal with big crises (legal governance scheme, effective capacity to integrate resources from different departments or ministries, etc.) • Presence of LNGOs able to deal with disasters. • Population's knowledge of DRR. • Capacity to coordinate national bodies with international bodies. • Capacity to implement in line with international standards. • Capacity to efficiently absorb external resources.
C.3	**Human geography**	• Geographical population distribution urban/rural. • Accessibility to different populations. • Diversity of cultures, languages.

Federal controlled territories and Kurdistan Region

Below is the summary of Iraq's contextual analysis and synthesis of organizational capacities. This examines GoI, KRG, and DIBs. Unless otherwise noted, the findings below apply to all three. Scoring is based on a 0-5 scale where 0 indicates no capacity in a given thematic area and 5 indicates high capacity.

Capacity Block	Capacity / Thematic Area	Score (0-5)	Strengths	Weaknesses
A. Society strength	A.1 Strength and power of civil society	2.3	• Wide range of CSOs including LNGOs, voluntary youth groups, religious groups, issue based networks, etc. • Few issue-based networks are influential in political life. • Number of independent LNGOs is increasing and most are focusing on advocacy. • LNGOs interact with international agencies, practice new tools and have access to knowledge. • Tribal and religious leaders play an important role in maintaining solidarity among communities.	• Majority of LNGOs are donor driven. Few LNGOs are vision driven. • Powerful LNGOs steered by political parties. • Most LNGOs have no influence on the economic, political and social dimensions in Iraq. • Independent LNGOs are small in number, nascent but evolving. • Most LNGOs are "contractors" rather than partners of INGOs. • Security concerns and political party disputes make it difficult for most LNGOs to expand beyond local areas. • LNGOs are not yet well articulated and/or coordinated among themselves. • Legal framework does not cope with the evolving role of civil society. • Government agencies do not consider LNGOs as key humanitarian actors.
	A.2 Human development	2.6	• Iraqis, older than 40 years of age are well-educated with high levels of resilience. • Youth (aged 15-24) make up 62.8% of Iraq's population. • Culture of supporting affected people maintains solidarity and unity among people and communities and helped in life saving. • Remarkable records of providing preventive health services in controlling communicable diseases	• Iraq has gone from being a lower middle-income country to an almost poor one over the course of a decade due to incompetent development strategy and protracted crisis. • Currently, the majority of young Iraqis have no sense of initiative or entrepreneurship. • The enrolment ratio in intermediate education for both sexes is barely 40%; for secondary education it is less than 30%. • The illiteracy rate is high among the youth, and the unemployment rate for both

Capacity Block	Capacity / Thematic Area	Score (0-5)	Strengths	Weaknesses
				• sexes combined is estimated at about 30%, and the education system is not well-connected to social and communal needs. • Inadequate basic services, nutrition or health. • More than 18.7% of Iraqis are living below the poverty line. • 32.3% of the population lacks access to drinking water and a large proportion of the population lacks access to an improved sanitation facility. • 14% of the population is vulnerable to food deprivation. • Social services do not cover all Iraqis. • Citizens are heavily dependent on the government and have no pro-active initiatives. • Dominant traditions and tribal laws have hindered the implementation of positive laws.
	A.3 Human Rights respect	2.5	• Most LNGOs established after 2003, are human-rights based and address relevant issues. • GoI has increased its engagement with international human rights mechanisms. • A state ministry is devoted to monitoring human rights status in Iraq and report on violations.	• Significant violations of human rights and IHL are taking place in Iraq affecting mainly IDPs, women and children. • Gender justice and equity is far from being fully in place even within several LNGOs. • The female employment rate is one of the lowest in the world. • Violations of children's rights have increased by 99% from June 2014 to May 2015. • Documented severe violations of minorities' rights. • Freedom of expression has little space and the right to voice is limited.

Capacity Block	Capacity / Thematic Area	Score (0-5)	Strengths	Weaknesses
	A.4 Humanitarian access	2.6	• Iraq has good humanitarian access with the exception of the DIBs and areas of conflicts. • In general well-connected LNGOs have free humanitarian access in all provinces.	• Large areas of the provinces of Ninawa and Anbar and some areas of Salahaddin, Diyala and Kirkuk have serious problems with security and humanitarian access even for LNGOs and CBOs. • Generally, it is hard to guarantee that IHL is respected in areas of conflict. • Humanitarian access to minority groups in most cases is limited due to either insecurity or political-ethnic sensitivity.
B. State and politics	B.1 Governance and institutional structures	2.5	• Decentralization is ongoing and some practices are in place. • There is an improvement of governance and government structures in some relatively stable governorates of Iraq and Kurdistan.	• Very fragile structures from community level upwards and insufficient resources to deliver mandates. • Insecurity remains the main issue in most areas of Iraq. • The Iraq state is still in the process of creating its structures and ways of working. • There is a lot of overlapping across ministries. Accountability and transparency are limited. • The issue of disputed areas and not fully implemented decentralization make it difficult to recognize clear governance entity and structure. • No recognized efforts, if any, to focus on recovery but more on saving lives.
	B.2 Public administration efficiency	2.0	• All citizens have equal access to public services; health, water, education, etc. • Public administration capacity is increasing in some governorates but not at national level. • Kurdistan is setting solid practices of public administration. • Information management and an early warning system are working well in Kurdistan and a few other governorates.	• Lack of transparency and accountability remain the main concern. • Public services are still inadequate all over the country, yet Kurdistan delivers better services compared to other parts of Iraq. • Financial administration is remarkably incapable. • Tax law is relatively old and does not respond to the needs of community. • Improving service delivery is not seen as a priority in GoI's plans.

Capacity Block	Capacity / Thematic Area	Score (0-5)	Strengths	Weaknesses
B. State and politics	B.3 Rule of law	1.9	• Human rights embedded in legal system. • Kurdistan has an acceptable respect for the rule of law with better-defined divisions of legislative, executive and judicial powers compared to other parts of Iraq. • There is a growing institutionalization of the rule of law across the two main regions.	• Theoretically and based on the Constitution, there is a separation of powers. However, political parties totally dominate the three powers creating a severely ambiguous governance landscape in Iraq. • Boundary lines, if any, between civil, police and military roles are very vague. • Rule of law is still not in place in many parts of the country. • Lack of minimum standards in humanitarian response and absence of a relevant legal framework. • The dominant tribal law and customary law hinder the implementation of formal criminal law and support corruption. • Despite the influential tribal-customary law, it is not yet well harmonized with Sharia and civil law which provide less space for democratic values.
	B.4 International legitimacy	3.3	• Both GoI and KRG are well recognized internationally. • Missions, diplomats, UN, international agencies and regional agencies have offices in main cities	• Iraq plays a notably weak role, if not a negative one regionally and in international fora. • International agencies and INGOs operating in Iraq need to adhere to two different policies, contradictory on some occasions, when they need to work in GoI & Kurdistan's territories. • Disputed areas are midway in terms of legitimacy or recognition due to their ambiguous situation. • Most of GoI's territories are a blind areas for the international community.
	C.1 National infrastructure	2.9	• Infrastructure is remarkably improved in Kurdistan. Slight improvement is taking place in GOI's areas. • Internet coverage in available through the country.	• National infrastructure is generally weak in most parts of the country which makes humanitarian logistical access very complex and expensive in some areas.

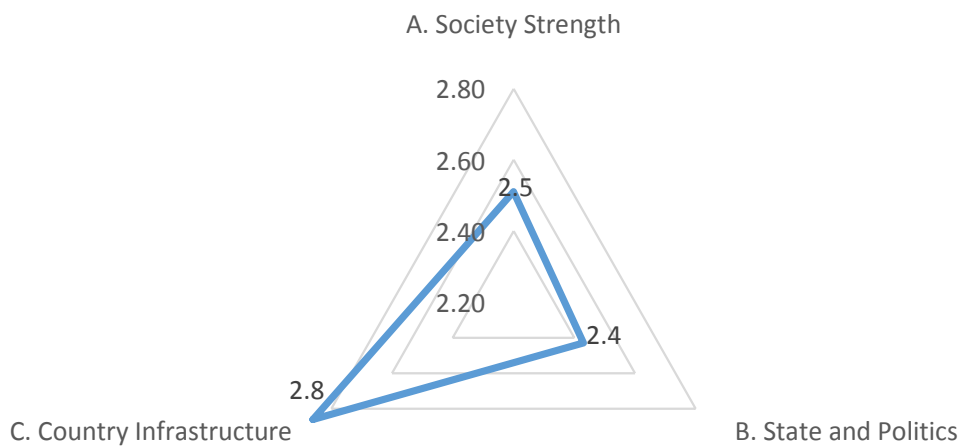| Capacity Block	Capacity / Thematic Area	Score (0-5)	Strengths	Weaknesses
C. Country infrastructure	C.1 National infrastructure	2.9	• Overall good access to communication systems and telecommunications infrastructure is improving. • Transportation means are available.	• The two most essential infrastructure components, transport and electricity, appear to be the weakest. • Lack of private-public partnership to develop infrastructure projects.
	C.2 National civil protection services	2.5	There is an attempt to build disaster risk management humanitarian structures across Kurdistan and some GoI territories. • Policy and structures in place to some level. • Kurdistan has the capacity to absorb large external resources. • Raised awareness and potential capacity to deal with international standards.	• Mobilization of resources for preparedness not a priority yet. • State agencies have no operational role. However, the role of these agencies is theoretically recognized but not in practice. • Legal frameworks need to be put in practice and policies should be in place. • Focus is on life-saving assistance, not longer-term aid. • Poor accountability, lack of transparency and widespread corruption. • Scale-up beyond local response capacity not well defined. • Large external resources might be misdirected due to corruption.
	C.3 Human geography	3.2	• Central and southern Iraq have significant cultural unity including language which generates opportunities for peoples' mobility and conflict solving. Kurdistan has the same unity. • Diverse ethnic groups with different languages, cultures, and values.	• Disputes among ethnic and/or sectarian groups is a feature of Iraq's recent history. • There is a growing trend to urbanization but the traditional rural pastoralist culture and ways of life are still ingrained and among conflict drivers in urban areas. • Tension around minority group acceptance in some areas.
C. Country infrastructure	C.3 Human geography	3.2	• Access to most populations.	• Growing urban population which influences public services and reduces quality.

The combination of degraded basic services, loss of livelihoods, increasing violence, and human rights violations makes humanitarian crises worse and limits the access humanitarian organizations have to provide assistance.

The two figures shown below represent Iraq's contextual analysis and highlight the drop in capacities in most areas. Resolving this requires a nationwide "rehabilitation" strategy with synergistic approaches that tackle life-saving assistance, livelihoods and early recovery in conjunction with defeating ISIS, political resolution to the causes of the crisis and social reconciliation in Iraq.
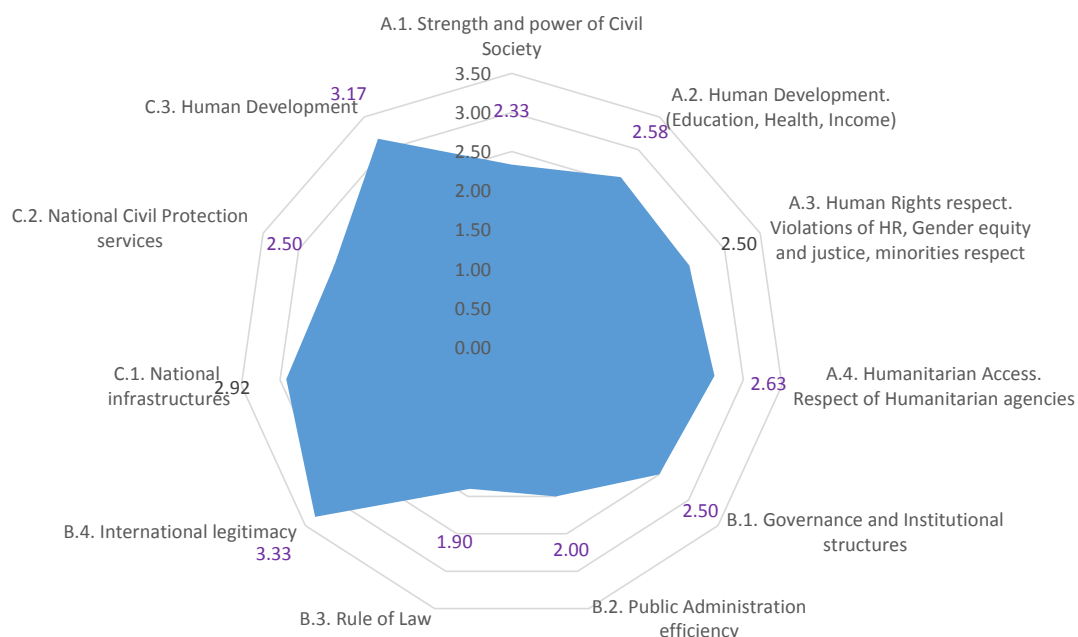
It also appears to be hard to address the response vacuum in much of Iraq as the Iraqi authorities cannot access or facilitate access to many of those in need. At the same time, the rule of law, governance, economic improvement and adequate public service delivery cannot be tackled by the humanitarian actors seeking to respond to emergency needs as these are the core responsibilities of the Iraqi authorities.

Capacity per Block

Iraq - Country Contextual Analysis

A.1. Strength and power of Civil Society — 2.33
A.2. Human Development. (Education, Health, Income) — 2.58
A.3. Human Rights respect. Violations of HR, Gender equity and justice, minorities respect — 2.50
A.4. Humanitarian Access. Respect of Humanitarian agencies — 2.63
B.1. Governance and Institutional structures — 2.50
B.2. Public Administration efficiency — 2.00
B.3. Rule of Law — 1.90
B.4. International legitimacy — 3.33
C.1. National infrastructures — 2.92
C.2. National Civil Protection services — 2.50
C.3. Human Development — 3.17

Kurdistan Region of Iraq

As compared to the GoI, the KRG has different typologies of state agencies that work in humanitarian response:

1) coordination bodies,
2) coordination and operational bodies, and
3) some governmental humanitarian organizations with similar structures to LNGOs, with funds secured from the government.

While the region faces challenges in relation to its own political and fiscal climate and competing claims as to its legal status, the international community provides generous support to different KRG state agencies in order to strengthen their capacities to respond to humanitarian crises.

In part as a result of this, Kurdish institutions have a relatively better ability to deliver assistance and manage certain aspects of the DRR Framework as compared to the GoI institutions. That being said, while the capacity exists, there is a deficiency in deploying any of this knowledge and experience effectively due to instability in the country, close to Kurdistan's border and its own, and ongoing political stalemate.
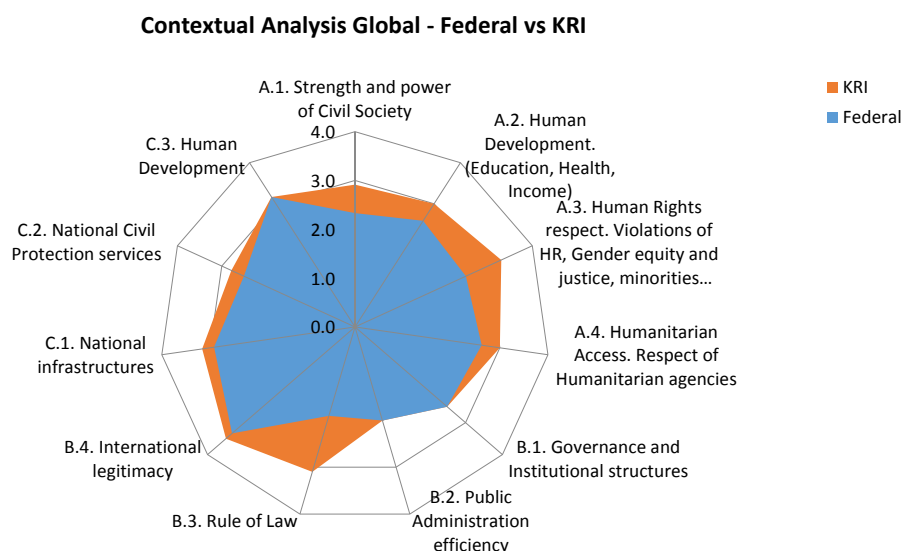
The context assessment for Kurdistan gives the following profile:

Capacity per Block
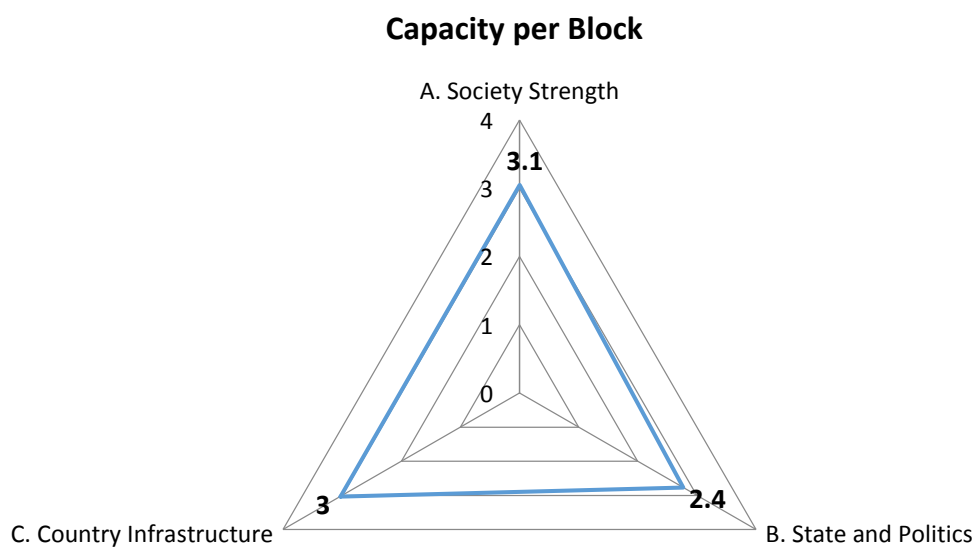
KRI - Contextual Analysis
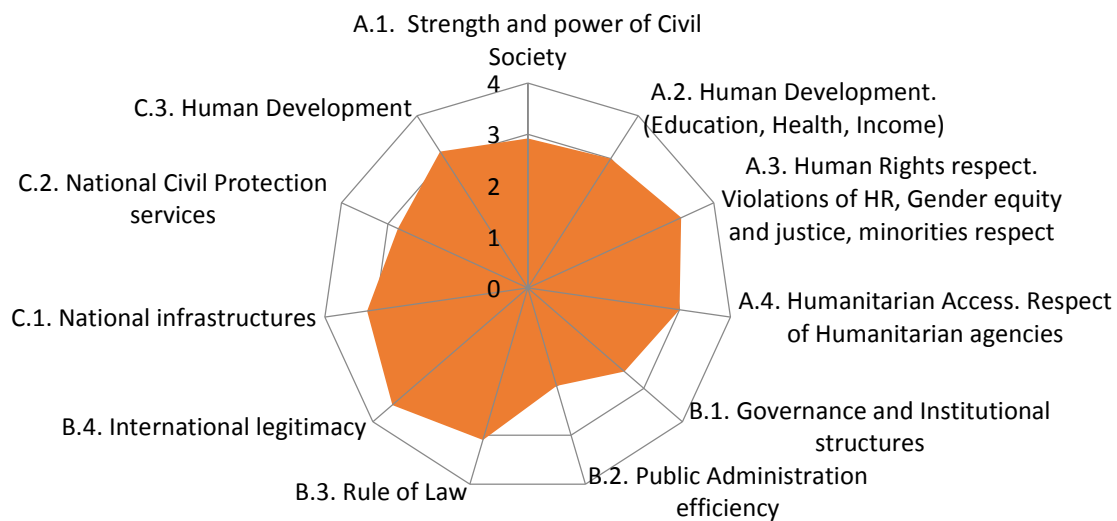
The below figure shows the differences in capacities between Federal Iraq and Kurdistan:

Contextual Analysis Global - Federal vs KRI

Organizational humanitarian capacities

This analysis provides more detail on the organizational humanitarian capacity of the state and the local organizations in GoI-controlled areas of the country and presents brief information on the rest of the humanitarian actors as needed.

- Joint coordination and monitoring center (JCMC) of GoI:

The JCMC is a federal structure established by the GoI in close coordination with the UN in early 2015 to help strengthen humanitarian response and disaster management. This structure is to act as a mechanism to coordinate actions within the government as well as between the government, the UN, and its partners in the federal part of the country. Prevention and early recovery aspects of assistance are not well defined within its mandate and it implements no activities on the ground. While the announced set of values of the JCMC consists of saving lives, providing relief, ensuring non-discrimination, prioritizing those most vulnerable and preserving dignity, there was no evidence that actors within this body are aware of international humanitarian values including impartiality, neutrality and independence.

The JCMC has some autonomy at the operational level while still under the supervision of the Prime Minister's Office. In terms of its membership, the JCMC is comprised of representatives of most federal ministries and is co-chaired by the Ministry of Migration and Displacement (MOMD). Human resources management is quite low and there is no available information on the total number of staff in this body though most serve other functions beyond their role in the JCMC. The body has low financial capacity as it is totally dependent on outside donors for its operations and as a result, has no surge capacity and is unable to cope with complex programs.

Its management system is very basic and heavily dependent on UNOCHA.

In terms of its role, nearly all humanitarian actors in Federal Iraq report their activities to the JCMC through the UN cluster system. The JCMC then acts as a secretariat, publishing these activities but producing no analysis of its own, though it lacks a clearly stated communications and dissemination strategy and does not have any specialized capacity with respect to knowledge within any cluster, including on humanitarian standards of operations.

While the JCMC is not an operational body, it does have some logistical capacity and good geographic outreach in areas under GoI control, though it is still yet to be determined whether governorate hub offices are associated with JCMC or MoMD. It does not however have a specific strategic plan, its organizational structure is vague, and it has no risk management and knowledge management capacity or any administrative or monitoring and evaluation units. Furthermore, its work so far does not reflect awareness of gender, rights-based approaches, and conflict sensitivity. The lack of any strategic plan is the reason no DRR programmes have thus far been implemented.

The JCMC capacity profile is as follows:

JCMC - Organizational Analysis
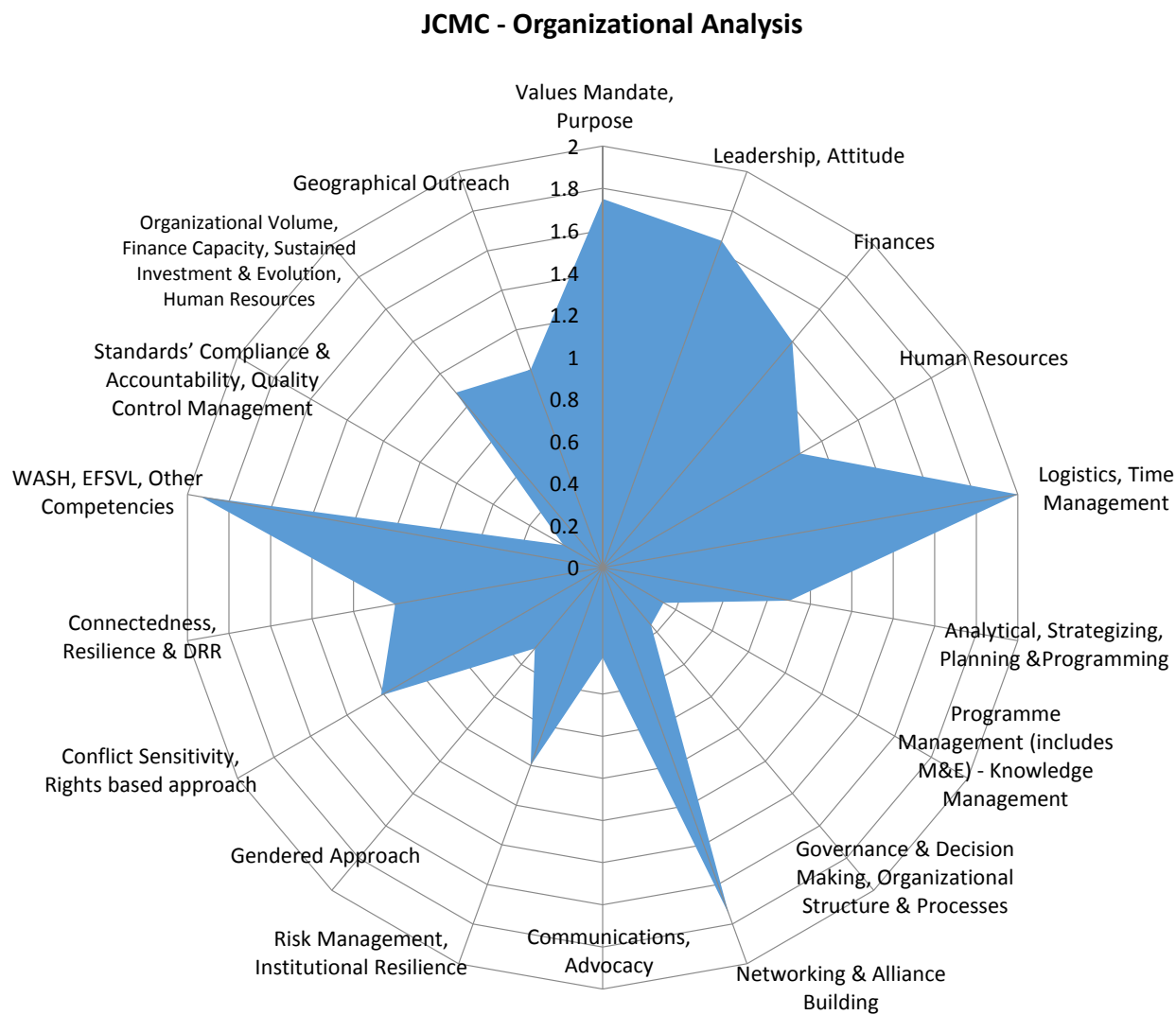
■ Joint crisis coordination centre (JCC) of KRG:

Similar to the JCMC, its Kurdish counterpart, the JCC was operationalized in early 2015 in close partnership between the KRG and UN. Unlike the JCMC, the JCC seems to have a proactive function to collect and analyze information on humanitarian developments and crises. This data is then used to develop policy advice to enable the government to take strategic decisions and manage and mobilize resources as well as coordinate a crisis response among and between relevant KRC ministries, the international community, and NGOs.

The JCC has a remarkable level of autonomy although still under the political supervision of the Kurdish Ministry of the Interior. Its mandate supports wide-ranging prevention, response and coordination roles, while its role in early recovery is not yet recognized. The body has a clear organizational structure and clearly assigned units, including for information management, data exchange, risk management, early warning and prevention, and crisis response and management. The body also has surge capacity to deal with complex programs as needed. Given all of this, the JCC has an evolving and improving logistical capacity and financial competency. This is further aided by a strategic plan that was developed in collaboration with the UN and which provides support to strengthen the JCC's analytic and strategic capacities. This includes understanding and taking on a resilience-DRR framed approach, based on humanitarian standards, to its programmes. The same holds true for gender and conflict sensitivity and rights-based approaches to work and practice.

At present then, the JCC has the capacity to translate its strategy into operational plans and specific tools for delivery, including developing contingency plans for expected crises. It seems to adhere to professionalism, impartiality, non-discrimination, prioritization of those most vulnerable, and the preservation of dignity. JCC staff also seem aware of the international humanitarian values of impartiality, neutrality, and independence. It also has good geographical outreach in areas under KRG control and is ready to expand beyond this to help the JCMC play a bigger role in response overall.

The JCC's capacity profile is as follows:

JCC - Organizatonal Analysis
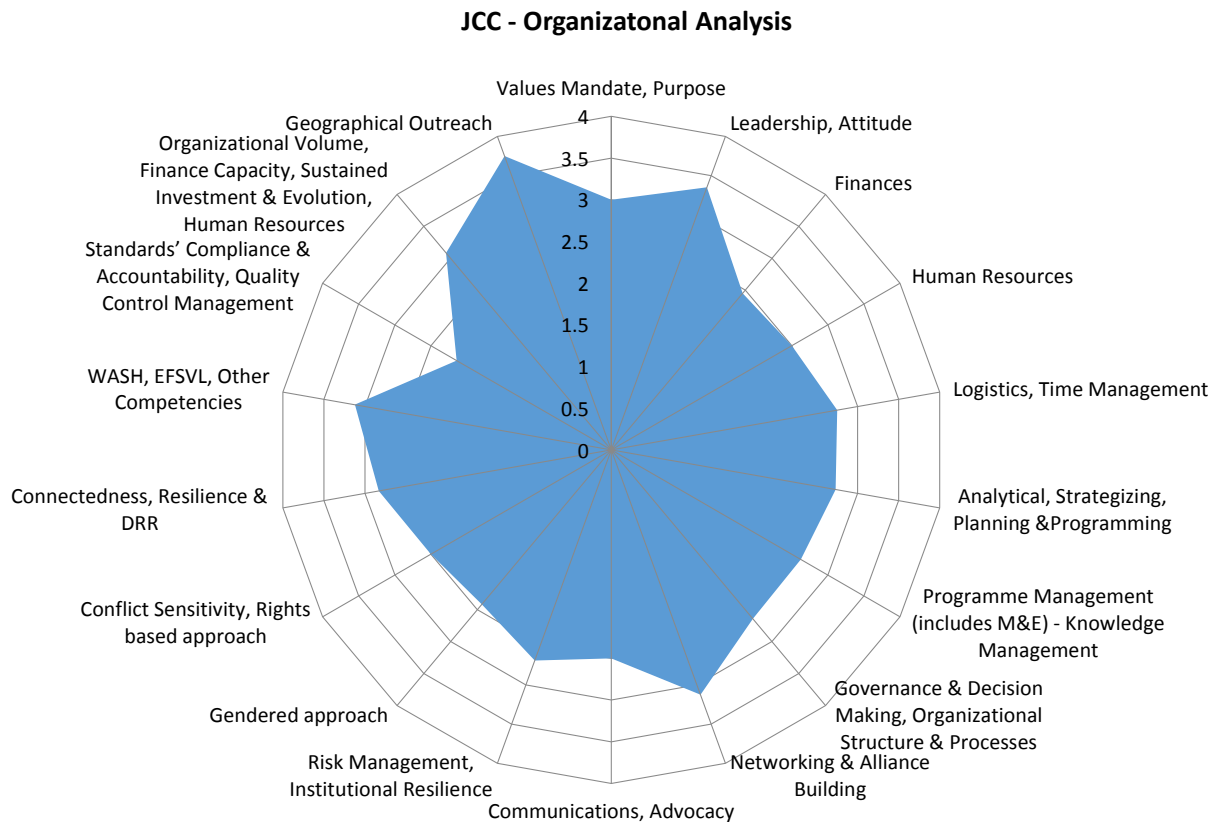
The below figure illustrates the differences in capacities between JCMC and JCC:
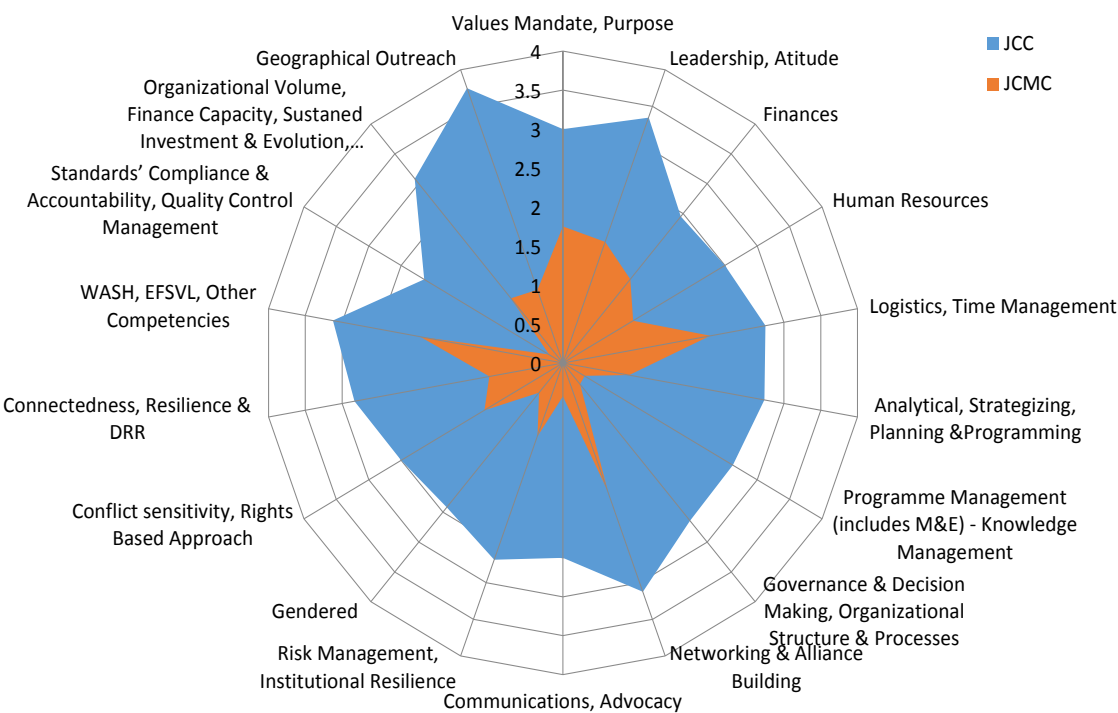
Local NGOs in Federal Territories

The table below provides an organizational analysis of LNGOs operating in federally controlled areas based on data collected via interviews with these entities.

Cluster	#	Thematic	Score 0-5	Strength	Weakness
1. Identity and Mission	1.1	1. Values mandate 2. Purpose	2.4	• Some LNGOs have a strong sense of commitment. They have clarity on their dual mandates: humanitarian and development. • Some LNGOs continue to provide services to communities and raise their credibility and profile.	• Most LNGOs designed their bylaws, vision, mission, set of values and principles to satisfy the donors and registration due-diligence. • Mission creep is a common trend among LNGOs. • There is ambiguity about how their mandates should evolve in a changing context, how their humanitarian role should be reflected and new approaches to this. • Most LNGOs perform aid work reactively, while development projects are their regular component. • Most LNGOs do not have clarity about their role and mandate. • Due to religious traditions and customs, women-focused and run LNGOs are vital humanitarian actors. However most do not yet have the capacity to become competent responders. • Most LNGOs have no role in planning and joint decision making.
2. Purpose	1.2	3. Leadership 4. Attitudes	2.0	Some LNGOs show strong personal leadership. Some LNGOs have invested in and delegated youth to lead. These LNGOs tend to be more visible and credible.	• Men dominate LNGO leadership. • Leaders of most LNGOs are reluctant to change and concerned about being replaced. • Institutional leadership within LNGOs is not visible. • Lack of leadership capacity is not recognized by LNGOs as a weakness.

Cluster	#	Thematic	Score 0-5	Strength	Weakness
2. Managerial Capacities	2.1	1. Finances	2.2	• Some funding is available for LNGOs through the UN - Iraq Humanitarian Pool Fund for immediate responses. • Some local resources are available to meet life-saving needs. • Some LNGOs have a large annual budget that exceeds most INGOs in Iraq.	• Funding is not available for LNGOs for preparedness and prevention programs but only when disaster strikes. • LNGOs have no access to governmental or national funds for immediate response. • Difficulty of fundraising and lack of diversity of funds is a challenge common to all LNGOs. • LNGOs are not fully independently funded and relying on UN agencies and other international donors is a common pattern among LNGO. Most donors use LNGOs as implementing partners only. • Donors have justified concerns about the need for increased LNGO financial accountability. • Most LNGOs have weak financial capacity and inadequate procedures in addition to lack of any degree of financial autonomy. • Transparency is not yet a regular practice.
	2.2	2. Human Resources (HR)	1.9	• Some LNGOs provide development opportunities to their staff, setting clear roles and responsibilities and establishing a positive working environment. • Most LNGOs have written HR policies and HR management procedures. • Some LNGOs have specialized humanitarian staff.	• Most LNGOs do not apply their HR policies nor put their HR procedures into practice. • Short-term projects make it very difficult for HR development and retention of staff. • There is a high turnover of qualified staff from within LNGOs, usually leaving for higher paid positions at the UN and INGOs. • Technical and professional knowledge are concentrated i n big cities while generally limited at provincial

| Cluster	#	Thematic	Score 0-5	Strength	Weakness
					levels. • Lack of contextualized guidelines and tools for CHS training.
	2.3	3. Logistics 4. Time management	2.3	• There is a growing awareness among LNGOs of their need to develop solid logistics capacity and understanding the importance of timeliness of delivery. • Some LNGOs are capable of making decisions in a timely manner.	• Most LNGOs have limited to no logistical capacity. • Lack of coordination hinders cost-effective use of logistics resources. • Some donors' practices delay LNGO responses, even for those with good time management. • Most LNGOs do not have material stocks or access to governmental warehouses.
	2.4	5. Analytical 6. Strategic 7. Planning and programming	1.8	• Some LNGOs are skillful in conducting needs assessments and applying design and planning tools. • Most LNGOs have standard strategic plans. • Operational planning is carried out by most LNGOs and it varies from one organization to another.	• Most LNGOs designed their strategic plan either as part of donor requirements or to meet certain programme objectives. • Programmes are almost all based on funding opportunities. • Most LNGOs have weak analytical capacity to interpret their strategies, if any, into effective planning. A serious lack of critical thinking was observed.
	2.5	8. Programme Management (includes M&E) 9. Knowledge management	1.8	• Most LNGOs have generally good experience in managing traditional programmes and reporting.	• Most LNGOs have very weak, if any, knowledge management systems. M&E protocols are not often integrated into organizational knowledge management. • M&E in most cases is a data collection process rather than a learning process.

Cluster	#	Thematic	Score 0-5	Strength	Weakness
	2.6	10. Governance and decision making 11. Organizational structure and processes	1.9	• Some LNGOs have a fully structured executive office which is more than the board. • Some LNGOs have governance structures, separation of authorities and management structures in place. They also have manuals and guidelines for finances, HR, procurement, security and safety, etc.	• Most LNGOs have standard manuals that have not been put into practice or updated. • Lack of understanding of the need for clear organizational structures, communication processes, and dynamics of change to ensure sustainability. • Most LNGOs have their boards and executive bodies sharing responsibilities and roles which affects their accountability.
	2.7	12. Networking and alliance building	2.4	• Some LNGOs have good networking capacity with UN agencies, INGOs, and the international community. • Some LNGOs have strong capacity to lobby and mobilize their local supporters. • Coalitions among LNGOs are made on an ad hoc basis.	• Humanitarian-based LNGO networks are almost non-existent. • Networks are mainly created on a project basis and vanish once donors withdraw. • UN clusters and humanitarian consortiums are dominated by INGOs. Thus LNGOs have thus far been unable to impact the humanitarian agenda. • There are no powerful networks of LNGOs that could influence the priorities of humanitarian programming. • Learning and sharing activities is not a pattern.
	2.8	13. Communications 14. Advocacy	2.0	• Using social media and websites is a growing trend among LNGOs in Iraq. • Most LNGOs have recognized the need for good communication and advocacy strategies and tools.	• Few LNGOs do have an advocacy agenda. • Lack of joint advocacy agenda on effective multi-stakeholder coordination, response quality and accountability, gender in emergencies, etc. • Most LNGOs do not raise their concerns with INGOs or UN agencies due to fear of losing support.

Cluster	#	Thematic	Score 0-5	Strength	Weakness
	2.9	15. Risk management 16. Institutional resilience	1.5	• A small number of LNGOs have data protection mechanisms. • A small number of LNGOs, especially youth-based ones, believe in new generations and have started to handover responsibilities to youth.	• Most LNGOs pay no attention to institutional risk management. • Leadership capacity in large scale crisis is a challenge for most LNGOs. • Handover in leadership roles is rare.
3. Approach, Commitment	3.1	1. Gender approach	2.5	• Some LNGOs are aware of the need to develop a locally-led gender agenda. • Most LNGOs are aware of gender issues in humanitarian work.	• Most LNGOs have no gender balance in decision making structures. • Gender does not emerge as an internally acknowledged priority or relevant topic for most LNGOs.
	3.2	2. Conflict sensitivity 3. Rights based approach	2.2	• All LNGOs understand the conflict sensitive approach.	• Few are with good with implementing conflict sensitivity. • While some LNGOs could differentiate between a rights based and needs based approach, most adopt the needs based model.
	3.3	4. Connectedness, resilience & DRR	1.3	• Some LNGOs have good understanding of resilience as part of aid work.	• Most LNGOs are not aware of resilience as part of humanitarian action or of DRR concepts. • LNGOs have no systematic knowledge or sustained efforts in carrying out DRR and resilience programs.
4. Technical Expertise	4.1	1. WASH competencies 2. EFSL competencies 3. Other competencies	1.8	• An increasing number of LNGOs have some degree of sectoral expertise and do participate in cluster coordination meetings. • Some LNGOs have trained staff for WASH and/or EFSL.	• Dedicated LNGOs in WASH, Livelihoods and other humanitarian sectors are limited in number. • Level of specialization is low in general.

Cluster	#	Thematic	Score 0-5	Strength	Weakness
					• LNGOs have a lack of capacity of basic minimum standards for most humanitarian sectors (WASH, EFSL, shelter, etc).
	4.2	4. Standards compliance & accountability 5. Quality control management	1.5	• Some LNGOs have indicated the added value of adopting and practicing QC management and Standard compliance. • Some LNGOs with Sphere training experience have started to apply these standards.	• QC Management is not yet a common practice for most LNGOs. • Standards, if available, are not localized or developed based on practice and needs. • Most LNGOs are not aware of Sphere standards or how they should be implemented. • Accountability and standards compliance are not a pattern.
5. Size and Capability	5.1	1. Organizational volume 2. Financial capacity and autonomy 3. Sustained investment and evolution 4. Human resources available	2.0	• Some LNGOs have indicated the need for and launched a self-assessment process to identify their capacities and gaps. • There are some vision-driven LNGOs with a significantly expanded volume.	• Most LNGOs have no prior experience in dealing with various types of disasters and managing humanitarian responses. • Available data does not help in determining the equation of size versus impact. • Most LNGO staff are not well trained and have no knowledge of humanitarian response. • The short duration of humanitarian programmes and dependency on international donors have constrained the expansion of LNGOs' capacity. • Most LNGOs rely on the UN and/or INGOs to respond to mega disasters. Even for smaller scale disasters, most LNGOs cannot respond through using local capacities. • Lack of interlinked and coordinated efforts to support LNGOs.

Cluster	#	Thematic	Score 0-5	Strength	Weakness
	5.2	5. Geographical outreach	2.5	• Some LNGOs are able to work with local communities and reach difficult to access areas	• Most LNGOs have a limited number of geographical areas of intervention. • Areas at the border of armed conflicts have less coverage due to security aspects. • Aid workers face many constraints to access people in need due to ethnic, sectarian and political disputes.

The following figures show the average humanitarian capacity profile of LNGOs in Federal Iraq:

Capacity per Block - Federal

## LNGOs AVERAGE CAPACITIES - Federal
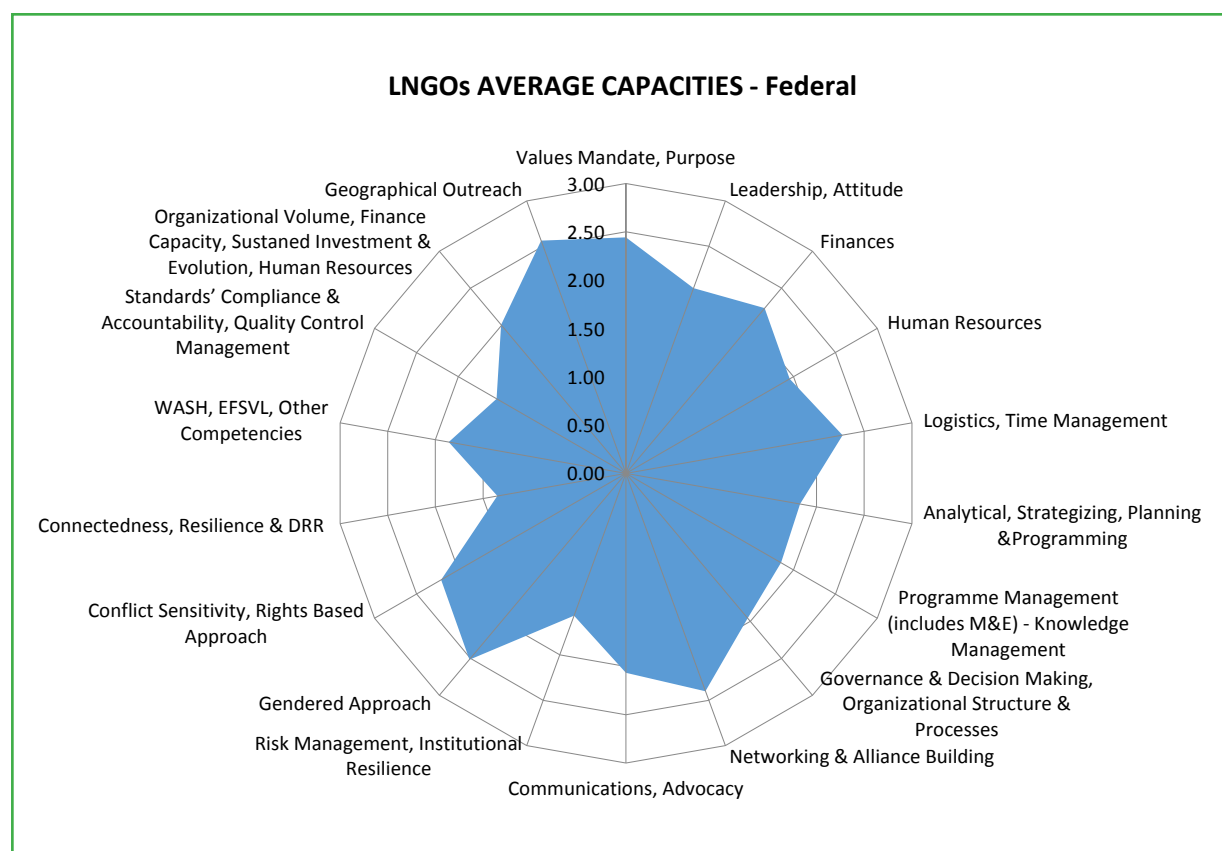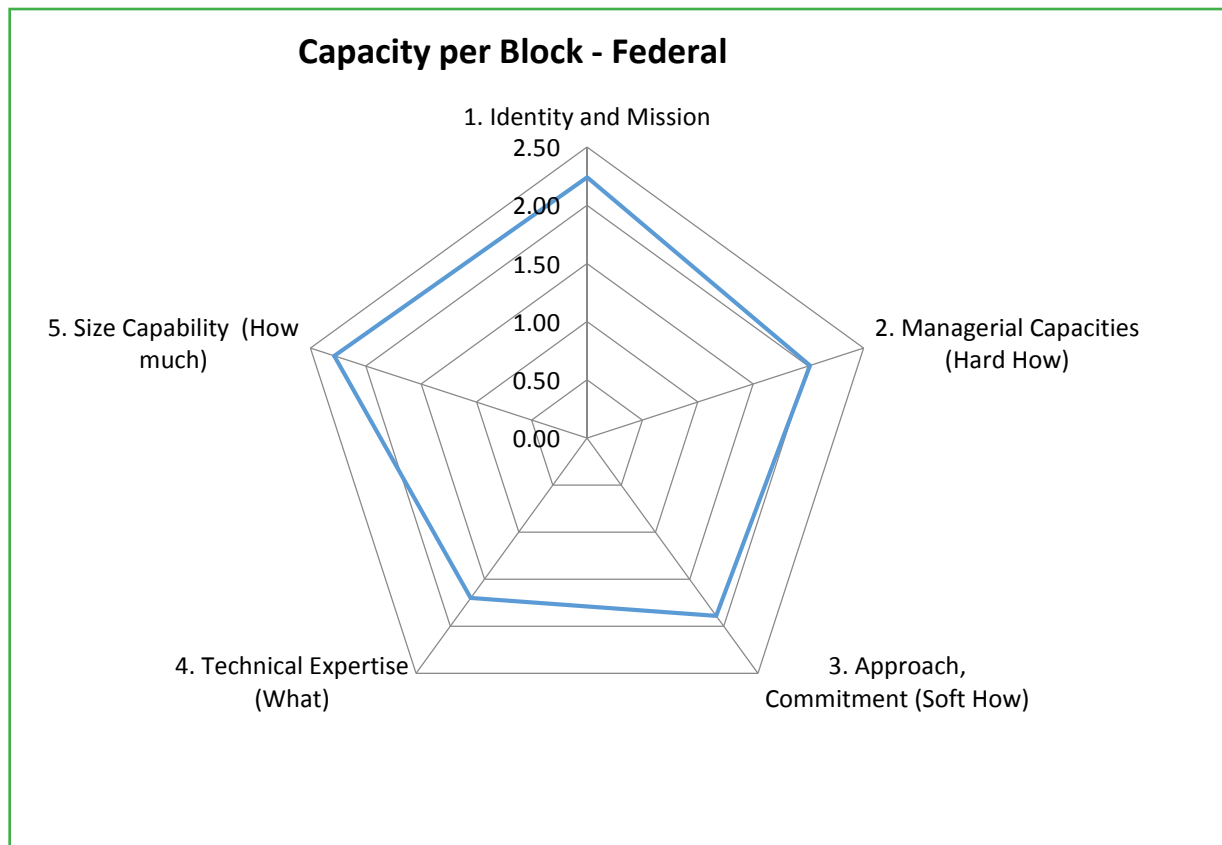
Local NGOs in Kurdistan

The KRG has a greater humanitarian and emergency response capacity than the GoI, however LNGOs in both Federal Iraq and Kurdistan face similar challenges and deficiencies. This is somewhat surprising given that LNGOs have existed for longer in Kurdistan than in Federal Iraq. While LNGOs in the Kurdistan Region have higher capacities in some fields over their Federal Iraq counterparts, the disparity between the functioning of LNGOs in Kurdistan is vast. The comments below are not equally applicable to all LNGOs, but rather provide a global picture of strengths and weaknesses of the sector in Kurdistan:

- Most LNGOs see humanitarian work as something ad hoc, rather than at the core of their mandates, though some organizations are starting to develop a clear humanitarian aim, abiding by said principles and integrating DRR into community development planning.

- Some organizations are willing to take a more proactive leadership role within the humanitarian sector and can make a real contribution to promoting the role of humanitarian LNGOs in Iraq.

- Related to this, there is an emerging interest among LNGOs in developing a joint advocacy agenda, including around gender justice.

- Some LNGOs have substantial annual budgets (above $3 Million) with a higher volume of human resources available, from full-time staff to volunteers.

- In addition, some LNGOs have a substantial budget with enough stability from donors to allow them to take more initiative and play an active role in humanitarian action.

- LNGOs are putting more resources toward livelihood recovery and rehabilitation.

- Young professionals are increasingly volunteering with LNGOs.

- Several LNGOs have well developed project administrative management capacity and procedures.

- A rights based approach is adopted by several LNGOs and linked to humanitarian programmes which are embedded into development programmes.

- Kurdistan is geographically well covered by the numerous LNGOs present there and it could be fully covered by local actors.

The below figure shows the organizational analysis of Kurdistan-based LNGOs from data gathered from relevant stakeholders:
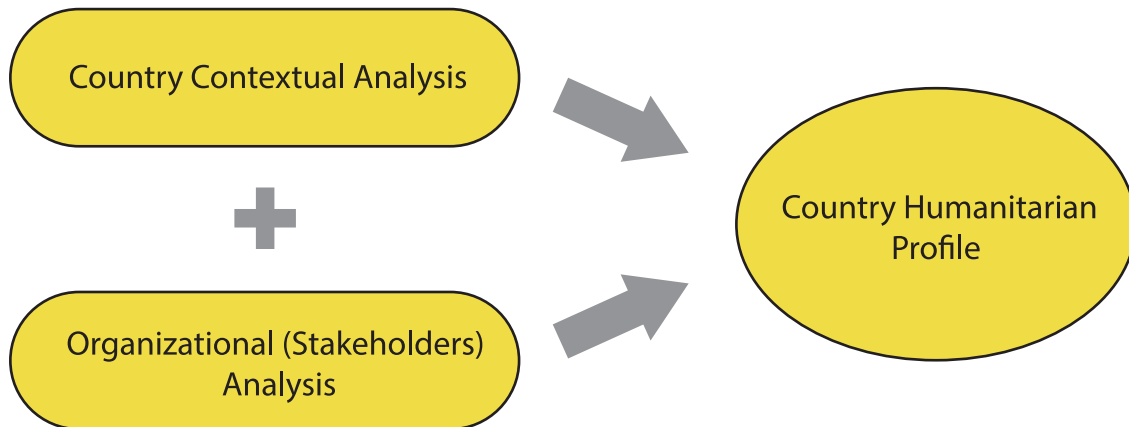

LNGOs AVERAGE CAPACITIES - KRI
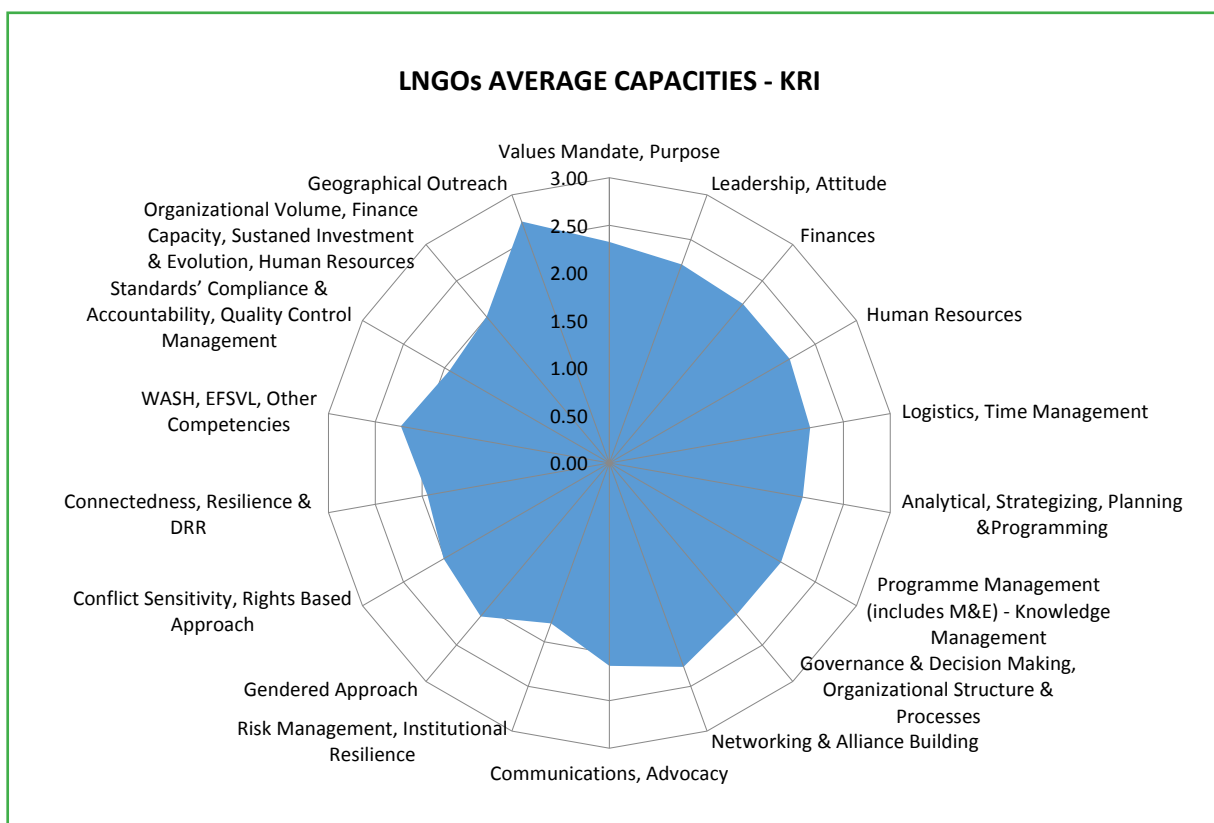
Below is a comparison of capacities between LNGOs in Kurdistan and those in Federal Iraq:
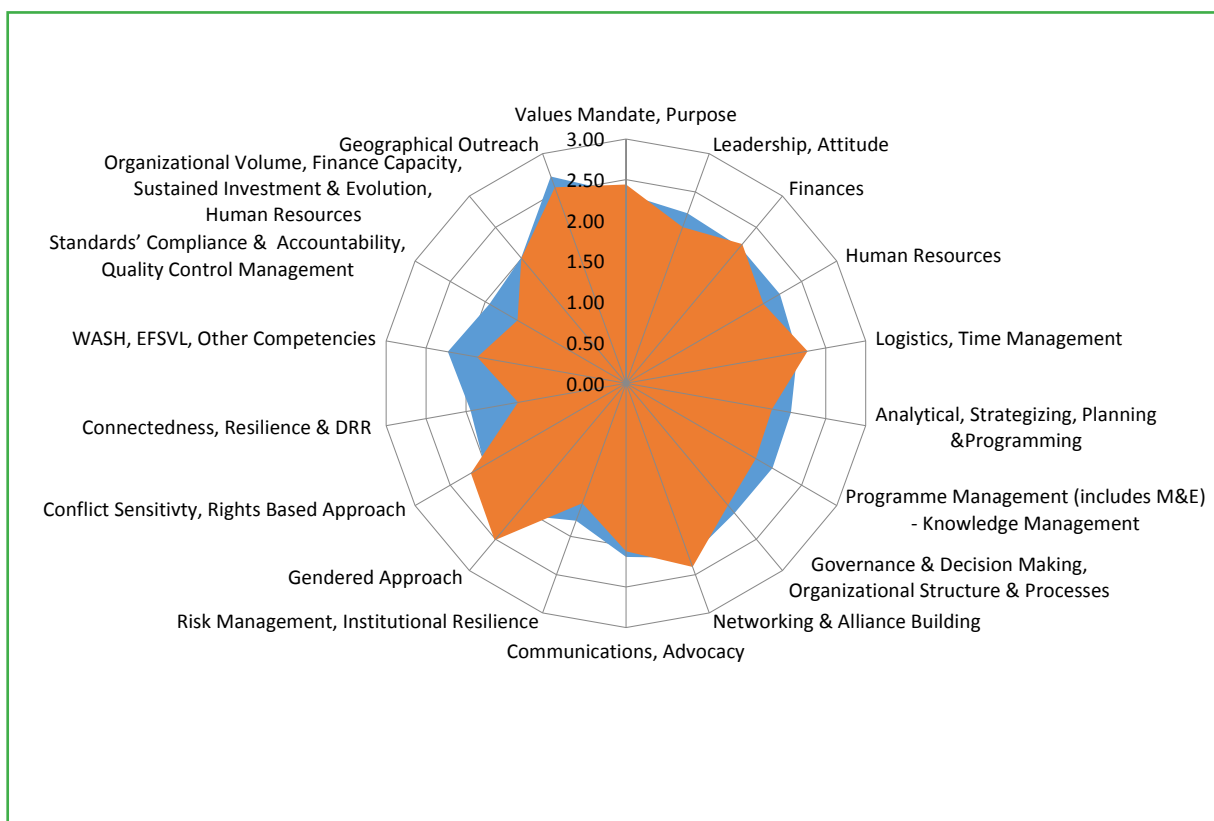
5. HUMANITARIAN PROFILE

Based on the combined analysis of a) the humanitarian context of the country and b) stakeholders' organizational analysis and the findings described above, the Iraq (Federal and Kurdistan) humanitarian profile could be described as follows:

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┌──────────────────────────────┐
│  Country Contextual Analysis │  ──►  ┌─────────────────────┐
└──────────────────────────────┘       │                     │
            +                          │ Country Humanitarian│
┌──────────────────────────────┐       │      Profile        │
│  Organizational (Stakeholders)│ ──►  │                     │
│         Analysis              │       └─────────────────────┘
└──────────────────────────────┘
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Humanitarian Crises in Iraq

- Federal Iraq and Kurdistan have similar humanitarian crisis contexts but should be treated with specific and differentiated strategies.

- Displacement and conflict are the most relevant hazards in both areas.

- More than 10 million people (30% of total overall population) are in humanitarian need, including nearly 4 million internally displaced people.

- Iraq has been designated by the UN as a level-3 emergency (the highest level), but this has not translated into urgently-needed funding. Iraqi governance is high in corruption and does not have effective policies to deal with the socioeconomic issues facing the country.

- The pattern of threats will gradually transform from displacement and conflict into localized violence stemming from economic, social, and political tensions if root causes not dealt with appropriately.

Understanding Humanitarianism

- The notion of humanitarianism is still dominated by the old interpretation of this type of work as a "short-term intervention to feed vulnerable people," rather than the assistance and advocacy to save lives, protect human dignity, alleviate suffering and a full set of actions to increase resilience and restore and protect the rights of people affected by crises.

- There is still limited understanding and use of existing international humanitarian standards and a lack of global perspective of the full cycle of humanitarian work.

- Dominant external international interventions reduce the available space for the new emerging local actors.

- Kurdistan is taking charge with new structures and practices recognizing the need for a multi-hazard approach to DRR.

The Humanitarian Sector

- Local governments are crucial in leading and coordinating with all humanitarian actors, at all levels despite limited capacities.

- The humanitarian sector is fully dominated by UN agencies who coordinate most with government structures and INGOs.

- International actors need to scale up their strategy of strengthening local humanitarian capacity, moving away from subcontracting LNGOs toward longer-term plans that focus on helping them enrich their mandate and values.

- The LNGOs that do have experience and an explicit humanitarian mandate are few and far between, and should work together to promote collaboration and synergies. That being said, the LNGOs with notable funding and connections do not favour partnering with smaller LNGOs to further build a more robust and leading local humanitarian capacity. This further leads to many LNGOs with less access to donors and international actors in order to influence and help shape humanitarian responses.

- Humanitarian principles and standards are not in common enough use to provide a connected framework, language and foundation for larger local partnerships.

- Moreover, there is reluctance to acknowledge that most LNGOs operate in very difficult security contexts with increased risk, meaning quality and accountability invariably drop.

State Agencies' Humanitarian Capacity

- The federal state agency in charge of humanitarian assistance in Iraq, JCMC, is not equipped to deliver effective humanitarian coordination or direct response at this time. The main factors behind this are:

  1) Lack of political priority for the humanitarian agenda by government
  2) Lack of strong leadership at agency level
  3) Lack of resources

- The Kurdish state agency, the JCC, while well-equipped in terms of effective humanitarian and emergency response coordination, is not yet appropriately positioned to deliver direct response and implementation on the ground.

LNGOs' Humanitarian Capacity

- Since 2003, LNGOs have been dependent on conditional international funding. The subcontractor relationship between LNGOs and the UN, INGOs, and other international agencies still prevails, limiting growth and capacity.

- The level of risk LNGOs are assuming is also not proportional to the healthy growth required for LNGOs to meet the international humanitarian standards of accountability and quality in delivery.

- LNGOs' humanitarian capacity is still weak but has high potential to improve if a) there is a coordinated and participatory internationally-led strategy in place that focuses on helping emerging local humanitarian actors to enrich their mandates and values, and b) a political will to strengthen the capacities of local actors and provide more space for them to manage and lead the humanitarian responses.

- Insecurity and the lack of an enabling environment have made it difficult for those LNGOs working in the aid field to act beyond service delivery.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

General to all

- The humanitarian and emergency response system in Iraq needs to shift from an internationally driven structure to one that is locally-owned and led, to coordinate and deliver both local and international assistance to those most in need.

- All humanitarian actors should support the local desire for greater capacity and professionalism while also encouraging the government to provide a legal framework and resources to ensure the following actions at national, regional and provincial levels:

  c) Adherence to humanitarian minimum standards to enable higher quality and accountable responses

  d) A focus on resilience building and a bottom-up approach for strengthening capacity.

- State agencies should be strengthened immediately to take full leadership responsibility in the provision of humanitarian and emergency responses, including coordinating assistance and ensuring quality standards.

  The framing of the humanitarian mandate in Iraq should shift from the current "life-saving" model to a "live in dignity" one where social rehabilitation, resilience, and peacebuilding measures are undertaken in parallel to humanitarian delivery of survival assistance.

- Public resources related to logistical support and supplies should be made available for LNGOs to access during times of crisis, in coordination with key humanitarian stakeholders in the country who have significant capacity in this regard.

- Efforts should be made to provide more space for LNGO participation in any humanitarian platform (e.g. using the local language instead of English and enriching the agenda of these platforms with discussion of substantive issues affecting LGNOs in providing humanitarian assistance).

- The private sector should be encouraged to effectively contribute to humanitarian response needs through productive private-public partnerships to develop infrastructure projects, tax exemptions for corporate philanthropy and giving, legislation to support youth entrepreneurs, etc.

- To further promote philanthropy and volunteerism in the country, a database for public participation in humanitarian response should be established to help private citizens and companies find ways to contribute time and/or resources to local efforts.

Government of Iraq

- The GoI should invest, with the support of international actors, in further building the humanitarian capacity of the JCMC and establish an enabling environment for local civil society to effectively lead in humanitarian implementation.

- The GoI should evaluate how the current humanitarian system is working and what is needed to respond to emergencies in a context where risk of crisis is high.

- The GoI should develop strategies that encourage local actors to create more volunteer opportunities as an essential aspect for the humanitarian response.

- The GoI must ensure the selection of beneficiaries is area-based, predicated on need and vulnerability, and that all have equal access to assistance that is delivered in an equitable manner.

- The GoI needs to create a national humanitarian coordination platform (e.g. like UNOCHA) that includes state agencies, LNGOs and private sector representatives.

Government of Kurdistan

- The KRG should promote international humanitarian values as a common framework and the Kurdish authorities should be open to reflecting the values of equality, non-discrimination and neutrality, in the wider context.

- The KRG should mobilize resources to scale-up good practices in humanitarian response within state agencies or communities and invest in strengthening the capacities for enhanced quality and accountability of humanitarian responses by all actors.

- The KRG should tackle sensitive issues like the fundamental right of access to some areas to ensure local and international aid agencies are able to reach the most vulnerable people, taking into account security constraints.

Local Actors

- Local humanitarian actors (LNGOs, CBOs, and local Authorities) should improve their potential by developing concrete action plans towards professionalization and leadership including through explicit identification of their mandates, strategies and roles.

- LNGOs should take the initiative and launch a strong locally-led network of humanitarian actors. Well-equipped visionary LNGOs should lead this charge to create a powerful humanitarian network in close coordination and collaboration with international actors through a complimentary approach.

- LNGOs willing to play a leading humanitarian role should build emergency funds, leadership and surge capacity, to ensure their ability to serve as first line humanitarian responders.

- Local humanitarian actors in Iraq must move beyond current debates around their need for external support and focus their actions toward developing effective structures and policies to strengthen their capacities to better respond to humanitarian crises.

- LNGOs, particularly those acting in hostile environments, should advocate for more timely support from the international community for improved implementation of their humanitarian programmes.

- Local humanitarian actors in Iraq should adopt the "localization of humanitarian aid" charter aimed at establishing greater support for local actors.

- Local humanitarian actors must develop strong advocacy campaigns directed toward local authorities and the general public related to the need for a locally-led humanitarian response that upholds the key principles of neutrality and impartiality in the delivery of aid to all vulnerable people.

The UN, INGOs and Other International Actors

- The UN should move toward a more complete humanitarian agenda in Iraq that is focused not only on working closely with the GoI and KRG, but includes a strategic vision on how to transfer to a locally-led response inclusive of LNGOs.

- The UN and INGOs should invest in strengthening the capacity of state agencies to better coordinate of humanitarian actions and ensure quality standards.

- International actors should also develop more strategic support for a selected number of capable LNGOs including helping these actors in developing their mandates, strategies, and actions to enrich a locally-led humanitarian agenda, including identifying strengths and weaknesses of existing structures.

- This support should move beyond funding and training towards developing an effective partnership framework that assumes more accountability in providing more space to local humanitarian leadership, secondments and internships allowing LNGOs to practice bottom-up and hands on learning to better implement their programmes.

- The international community should move beyond short-term project-implementation towards more sustained support and provision of resources to local actors for a full cycle of humanitarian work through a joint strategy with a high commitment to realize local actors' potential and promote good practices to meet universal humanitarian standards.

- The international community should support local actors in developing reliable early warning mechanisms to be used by all actors to facilitate a rapid response when needed. In addition, support should be given to help those LNGOs with leadership potential to be able to secure emergency funds and surge capacity to provide first line assistance adhering to the principles of accountability and transparency.

- The UN and INGOs should play a more active role in promoting a rights-based approach and addressing sensitive issues like humanitarian access to some areas as a fundamental humanitarian principle and right.

- The UN should re-shape its clusters to recognize and promote local leadership (authorities and LNGOs), providing more space for capable local actors to work in complementary ways with international actors.

- International actors in Iraq should adopt the charter on "localization of humanitarian assistance" aimed at strengthening the capacity of local actors. This includes providing incentives to ensure LNGOs and state agencies assume their responsibilities under this model.

Oxfam

- Oxfam should widely communicate this analysis in Iraq to different humanitarian stakeholders for more development and input.

- Oxfam should play a leading role in facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogues, technical exchanges, and capacity building of local partners (state actors, LNGOs, civil society, youth groups and humanitarian based networks).

- Oxfam should advocate for promoting humanitarian professional standards and good practices across all local actors to benefit disaster management capacity. This includes investing time and advocacy effort in developing a sustainable approach to stronger collaboration between international, national, and local humanitarian stakeholders.

- Oxfam should establish a working group made up of LNGOs to help them develop strategies for a local humanitarian agenda and facilitate convening regular meetings with and campaigns for the UN, INGOs, and persuade regional and federal authorities to adopt this new, locally-led agenda.

Local Humanitarian Capacity: Objectives and Indicators

The above analysis and related recommendations serve as a starting point for generating a broad set of objectives in terms of strengthened humanitarian capacities to be achieved in Iraq. These findings have been purposely reduced to a limited number of key objectives and indicators (milestones) in order to make such an undertaking manageable, understandable and straightforward in its monitoring.

This set of objectives and indicators are presented at a nationwide level and should be adjusted in every respective area in order to ensure they are contextualized, further discussed, validated and owned by local actors.

Humanitarian Capacity to Achieve	Progress Indicators	Monitoring Mechanism
1. PRINCIPLES AND STANDARDS **All actors understand and respect humanitarian principles, and standards and are able to put them into practice**	1.1. Humanitarian principles and standards are adapted to the local context and actors apply them in their work. 1.2. Learning between local and international actors on application of humanitarian principles and standards are is widely shared.	• Balanced multi-stakeholder humanitarian forum (HF) for accountability and networking established; • Learning and sharing actions are well planned.
2. ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY **State agencies and LNGOs are trusted by the international community**	2.1 Practical and context specific approach for accountability and transparency (e.g. partnership-accountability framework) is developed by all humanitarian actors (State agencies, LNGOs, UN, and INGOs). 2.2 The practical approach is adopted at all levels and by all humanitarian stakeholders including government. 2.3 State budget allocates more funds to humanitarian state agencies and there is an increase of humanitarian funds going to LNGOs.	• HF monitors the practical approach (partnership) on quarterly basis. • Public has access to State budget.
3. HUMANITARIAN AID IN DIGNITY **Humanitarian actors move from "life-saving" to protecting human dignity, and increasing resilience**	3.1. Humanitarian programmes go beyond the basic survival thematic towards other aspects such as protecting human dignity, alleviating suffering and increasing resilience systematically.	• A specific group, part of the HF, monitors the quality of humanitarian aid.
4. COMPLEMENTARITY **Available local humanitarian capacities within state agencies and LNGOs are complemented by international stakeholders**	4.1. State agencies focus on co-ordination of humanitarian aid and ensuring quality standards of humanitarian aid provided by different stakeholders. 4.2. Local and international actors have clarity of mandates, specific roles and enough capacity to implement agreed roles. 4.3. LNGOs able to interact with state agencies and international actors. 4.4. State agencies are supported mainly by international actors. 4.5. International actors move beyond the subcontractor model to a partnership model for programme delivery. 4.6. INGOs and the UN assist more leading roles to local humanitarian actors.	• Periodic review • Cluster meeting agendas include this regularly. • HF monitors this periodically.

Humanitarian Capacity to Achieve	Progress Indicators	Monitoring Mechanism
5. HUMANITARIAN ACCESS **Aid work in conflict areas**	5.1. Aid reaches those in need regardless of ethnic and religious identity, and region. 5.2. Local and international actors address the issue of humanitarian access and risk management and agree on a protocol of action for negotiating humanitarian access.	• Local and international actors form a small but effective security and risk management working group to evaluate the response.
6. TIMELY RESPONSE **State agencies and LNGOs are able to respond to humanitarian crises in a timely and efficient manner**	6.1. LNGOs build their own emergency reserve funds, emergency logistic stocks and human resource surge capacities. 6.2. State agencies and LNGOs increase the quality and speed of their needs assessments using universal humanitarian standards and these assessments are accepted by international stakeholders. 6.3. Humanitarian actors set up a response framework as part of national contingency plans and decide who/how to facilitate timely aid delivery.	• Response evaluations. • Cluster meeting agendas include this regularly. • HF monitors this periodically.
7. RESILIENCE AND DRR **Humanitarian programs include DRR and resilience approach**	7.1. Humanitarian programs always include a DRR and resilience approach and specific components. 7.2. Government and international community set a specific strategy to support civil society to develop better performance of humanitarian delivery programs.	• Incorporated regularly in the Cluster meeting agendas. • Periodic review. • Joint periodic evaluations on DRR and resilience across humanitarian actors.
8. STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT **LNGOs move from project based donor driven approach to a strategic, mission led approach**	8.1. Incentives are implemented to give more space of LNGO in the humanitarian forum. Number of LNGOs to INGO will be at least 1:2 by the end of 2017. 8.2. LNGOs lead humanitarian sector by making a strong network led by those organizations with more capability.	HF monitors this periodically
9. HUMAN RESOURCES LNGOs have professional, motivated and stable qualified humanitarian staff	9.1. Turnover of staff is reduced within LNGOs. 9.2. International actors make a commitment solely to develop LNGOs' humanitarian human resources.	HF monitors this periodically

7. STEPS FORWARD

This fresh analysis is a first effort to set a "baseline" of humanitarian country capacity in Iraq and an agenda towards strengthening this capacity. It aspires to bring valid and relevant points to the fore for follow-up discussion and action.

It provides a good opportunity to look at the country humanitarian capacity from a global perspective which informs Oxfam's long-term humanitarian strategy and programming with the partners. As Oxfam develops this strategy it needs to consider:

- Assessing potential local humanitarian partners around their mandates and values rather than their operational capacities.

- Partnerships which include technical support provided by Oxfam aiming to enhance knowledge and skills (e.g. on Sphere Standards) and community-based approaches.

- Partnership plans that consider LNGOs taking a leading role in developing response and contingency plans, enhancing collaboration and coherence.

This analysis needs to be shared as appropriate with the main humanitarian stakeholders in Iraq and the region, those who are willing to be involved in the shift of power and take leading roles in moving to a more collective localized approach.

Oxfam is well-positioned to spearhead such an approach and campaign for localizing humanitarian leadership. Humanitarian actors need to integrate a capacity building component within all their programmes that runs parallel to DRR and resilience approaches.

At this point, for both federal and Kurdistan areas, all humanitarian stakeholders are invited to develop an action plan where different milestones including those proposed above will be discussed, enriched, and agreed upon. The resulting agenda will be owned by actors accountable for taking it forward through a constructive engagement between local and international actors supported by Oxfam to promote capacity for humanitarian response in Iraq.

It is expected that putting such a vision in place will take few years and will require additional resources that all humanitarian actors should contribute to, thus ensuring its success.

ANNEX 1. STAKEHOLDERS INTERVIEWED

A total of 27 organizations and state agencies were interviewed between June-August 2016 as follows:

Governorate	Category	Organization/Agency
Baghdad (11)	LNGO	Salam AlRafidain
	LNGO	AlMurtaqa for Development
	LNGO	United Iraqi Medical Society
	LNGO	Iraqi AlAmal Association
	LNGO	Baghdad Women Association
	LNGO	Dijlat AlKhair
	LNGO	Civil Center Centre for Studies and Legal Reform
	LNGO	Rafidain Women Coalition
	State Agency - Federal	Joint Coordination and Monitoring Center (JCMC)
	Federal Ministries	Ministry of Migration and Displacement
	Semi-Governmental Organization	Iraqi Red Crescent Society
Erbil (7)	LNGO	People Aid Organization
	LNGO	Al-Mesala Organization
	LNGO	Al_Murtaqa Organization
	LNGO	Kurdistan Human Right Watch
	LNGO	Peace Generation Network
	LNGO	Women Empowerment Organization
	State Agency - KRI	Joint Crisis Coordination Centre (JCC)
Dohuk (6)	LNGO	Nujeen Organization
	LNGO	Harikar Organization
	LNGO	Alind Association
	LNGO	Shingal Organization
	LNGO	Dohuk Institute for Culture
	LNGO	Humanity Association
Kirkuk (3)	LNGO	Insan Association
	LNGO	Rehabilitation, Education and Community Health Association
	LNGO	National Institute of Human Rights

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Aknowledgements