

Migration Awareness, Access to Reintegration and Strengthening Capacities in Iraq (MAARC)

Factsheet 2024



Background

In the recent decade, Iraq has seen the growth of its diaspora, new migration destination patterns, and continued presence of a migrant work force in the Iraqi labour market – occurring in the situation of a growth in the working-age population and notable internal displacement. Since 2017 and until 2021, the migratory movements towards Europe for protection need decreased, and an increase in return migration was observed, bringing return and reintegration to the fore of public discussions and governmental responses in Iraq. Forced displacement, which occurred in response to external circumstances beyond individual control and entailed a range of irregular migratory paths. Any effort directed at changing this perspective of potential migrants necessitates extensive information sharing on legal migration pathways, providing evidence on the dangers of irregular migration, sharing information on return and reintegration avenues and protection of migrants' rights.

The situation is exacerbated by a lack of access to migration-related information, which is mainly gained informally, through word of mouth. Those who are considering emigrating may easily be convinced by the stories they hear from the persons abroad, which explains why Iraqi migrants report such high levels of disappointment connected to their experiences abroad. Given that labour migration has not been a priority for the Government of Iraq, legal migration as a concept has not been part of policy planning to date. Majority of potential Iraqi migrants aim to migrate outside of Iraq rather than internally to a different province, as they view economic opportunities outside of Iraq rendering greater benefits. Push factors reportedly have greater influence compared to the pull factors and include insecurity, instability, deteriorating economic conditions, and lack of jobs.

From the intervention logic perspective, under the project “**Migration Awareness, Access to Reintegration and Strengthening capacities in Iraq (MAARC)**”, funded by the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration and implemented by ICMPD, *focuses on the set up and operationalisation of Migrant Resource Centre (MRC) in Erbil as a one-stop-shop would serve to respond to the needs of the potential, outgoing, and returning migrants in making their migration decisions in an informed and safe manner through an array of services i.e. counselling, outreach and referral– while at the same time increasing the capacity of the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) in migration management by providing such information through their participation in the awareness raising and knowledge building activities on migration.*

Donor	Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI)
Implementing partner	ICMPD
Duration	November 2023 – December 2024
Budget	6,000,000 NOK
Overall objective	Contribute to increased awareness and access to services on migration - including referrals, return, and reintegration - for outgoing, intending, and returning migrants in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KR-I), and to strengthened capacities of the duty bearers amongst the Government of Iraq (GoI) and of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) in migration management.

The MRC setup and functionalities are ensured in coordination with the Joint Crisis and Coordination Centre, supported by the Ministry of the Interior in the Kurdistan region of Iraq. Programmatically, **the work of MRC-Erbil contributes to the implementation of the Vision on Sustainable Reintegration of Returnees in Iraq and its Action Plan**, produced in a joint collaborative effort amongst the governmental and non-governmental entities in Iraq as part of the whole of government and whole of society approach, with the support of ICMPD.



Objectives

- ☉ To facilitate timely, accurate, and comprehensive information flow on migration, including reintegration and referrals to the available services, to targeted audience in Kurdistan region and beyond, through MRC in Erbil and in partnership with the KRG.
- ☉ To increase capacity of the KRG in migration management, including return and reintegration.



Outputs and Activities

Activity Coordinator ICMPD

Involved partners KRG JCC, KRG MOLSA, MOMD in the KR-I, local media, academia, technical/vocational training centres, PS, local NGOs

Target group(s) Potential, outgoing, and returning migrants, their families, and communities

Activity location Erbil

Output 1: Timely, accurate, and comprehensive information flow on migration through the set up and operationalisation of MRC in KR-I

Activity 1.1. Setting up MRC in Erbil

Activity 1.2. Operationalisation of the MRC: Awareness raising and outreach activities

Activity 1.3. Monitoring of the MRC workplan and activities in KR-I

Output 2: Strengthened capacities of the KR-I Government

Activity 2.1. Capacity building for select representatives from KR-I Government, including KRG MOLSA

Activity 2.2. Integration of MRCs within the structure of KR-I Government

Activity 2.3. Expansion of reintegration pathways through the mechanisms contained within the MSP



Expected Outcomes

- ✓ Change in the the knowledge, attitudes, and intentions (KAIs) of potential migrants regarding regular and irregular migration change
- ✓ Access and awareness of available return and reintegration, and MRC services by the returnees
- ✓ Governance system in relation to migration, including return and reintegration, strengthened.

To find out more, please contact

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UDI

Utlendingsdirektoratet
Norwegian Directorate
of Immigration



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