



The Government of Canada Supports Institutional Capacity Enhancement and Gender Mainstreaming Activities in Iraq

Baghdad, 25 June 2019 – The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) welcomes a new contribution of CAD 5 million (approximately USD 3.75 million) from the Government of Canada to facilitate and enhance gender mainstreaming initiatives in the mine action sector, while simultaneously developing institutional capacity enhancement in the country.

The presence of explosive hazards, including improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in areas retaken from the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), continues to endanger the lives of women, men, boys, and girls and hinder the return of displaced communities.

This contribution from Canada will strongly support the promotion of safe, orderly, voluntary, and sustainable return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) back to their homes. Gender mainstreaming initiatives will ensure that the needs of women, men, boys and girls are taken into primary consideration in the Government of Iraq, mine action implementing partners and UNMAS activities in pursuit of this effort. Specifically, through workshops, training and dedicated support to Government stakeholders, this project will raise awareness and strengthen processes, knowledge and skills to mainstream gender in explosive hazard management operations. The development of action plans will work to ensure gender is integrated into coordination, planning and prioritization of explosive hazard response, as well as in relevant standard operating procedures.

In addition, through institutional capacity enhancement, government entities will receive comprehensive training and up-to-date tools that are internationally recognized and abide by global standards. This paves the way for future self-reliance and equips Iraqis with a well-established system to mitigate the threat posed by explosive hazards.

This new contribution was announced at a “Safe Home” photo exhibition in Baghdad sponsored by the Government of Canada, highlighting the behind-the-scenes personnel, specifically the women who continue to impact their surrounding communities with clearance, risk education, and capacity enhancement efforts.

Mr. Paul Gibbard, Ambassador of Canada to Iraq, said: *“Canada recognizes that mitigating explosive hazards risks in Iraq is vital for the country’s long-term development. For the past several years, Canada has been proud to support efforts to remove explosive hazards in affected areas, as well as programs to aid their victims. This work with UNMAS will complement those efforts by developing the capacity of Iraqi institutions to manage these challenges and address this key priority in a way that meets the needs of all affected women, men, girls and boys.”*

“Canada is an essential contributor to the UNMAS programme in Iraq, and is especially supportive of our efforts to mainstream gender across all of our activities. Whether through direct human resource matters or indirect policies for our field operations, ensuring that we have a diverse and more inclusive team is one of our top priorities, and we are happy to have the support

of Canada in this process,” said Mr. Pehr Lodhammar, UNMAS Senior Programme Manager in Iraq.

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