



The Implementation of the Kurdistan Regional Action Plan
for Human Rights
(2021 - 2025)

Annual Review

Office of the Coordinator for International Advocacy
Presidency of the Council of Ministers

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Introduction

Following the endorsement of the KRG Human Rights Action Plan by the Presidency of the Council of Ministers in September 2021, an inaugural report (Action Plan Report) was meticulously crafted, delineating comprehensive strategies tailored for the legislative, executive, and judicial arms. Subsequently, recommendations pertinent to each branch were discerned and judiciously executed.

By virtue of Decision No. (194) of the Prime Minister, dated 15/1/2023, has duly ratified the inaugural annual report concerning the execution of the Regional Plan for Human Rights. Subsequently, ministries and non-ministerial entities have been directed to foster collaboration with the Office of the Coordinator for International Advocacy, as outlined in Council of Ministers Directive No. (1707) issued on (12/2/2023). All ministries were duly apprised of this directive through their respective ministerial offices, thereby soliciting their compliance with the aforementioned decision.

Following the feedback provided by all pertinent authorities, a subsequent report, titled (Report on the Implementation Mechanism of the KRG Human Rights Action Plan) was diligently compiled in June 2022.

This comprehensive document meticulously delineated both the realized and pending recommendations while offering imperative suggestions for prompt action to enact the proposed measures. Subsequently, in December 2023, the third report, denoted as the (inaugural-year assessment of the Kurdistan Regional Government's Human Rights Action Plan implementation) was tendered for review during the Council of Ministers session convened on 15/1/2023, where it garnered unanimous approval.

In May 2023, the fourth report, namely the (Classification Report on Implementation of Recommendations by Institutions) was compiled. This comprehensive document categorizes the extent to which recommendations issued by institutions within the region have been acted upon. These categorizations delineate the status of recommendations into three distinct tiers: fully implemented, not implemented, and those currently undergoing the implementation process.

The fifth report offers a comprehensive comparative evaluation of the implementation progress of recommendations categorized by topic, spanning from September 2021 to July 2023, marking the initial stages of plan adoption.

In the year 2022, among a total of 400 recommendations, 139 were successfully implemented, while 226 remained pending, with 35 actively undergoing implementation. In contrast, by the year 2023, the count of implemented recommendations rose to 171, while the number of pending recommendations decreased to 127, and recommendations in the process of implementation reached 102.

The percentage distribution of implemented recommendations in 2022 stood at 34.8%, pending recommendations at 56.5%, and those in the implementation phase at 8.8%. However, by 2023, these figures shifted, with implemented recommendations constituting 42.8%, pending recommendations at 31.8%, and those under implementation at 25.5%. This trend signifies a notable advancement in the plan's implementation process.

From the commencement of January through the conclusion of December 2023, a total of 140 visits and meetings were held with representatives from the Kurdistan Regional Government, the Federal Government, diplomatic envoys, consular bodies, UN entities, and international agencies.

Additionally, there were 18 press briefings and interviews conducted with both local and international media channels, alongside the facilitation of 59 instructional sessions and seminars. Moreover, 15 sessions were convened by the National Coordination Committee (NCC) with the United Nations Team to Promote Accountability for Crimes Committed by Da'esh (UNITAD) team, along with collaborative gatherings held at national and international United Nations headquarters. Furthermore, we have published 15 comprehensive reports and disseminated over 96 official statements throughout this period.

During the execution of the Regional Action Plan for Human Rights on October 15, 2023, overseen by Prime Minister Masrour Barzani and delegates from pertinent entities within the Kurdistan Regional Government, the Federal Government, UN entities, and local and international bodies, the Office of the Prime Minister orchestrated the inaugural conference on countering narcotics and psychoactive substances as part of the endeavor to adhere to international directives.

On the contrary, a significant volume of correspondences, comprising over 773 formal letters directed to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers and various governmental bodies, coupled with approximately 1472 email exchanges, has occurred with governmental entities, United Nations agencies, consular representatives from 28 nations, diplomatic envoys, international bodies, the United Nations Investigative Team for Accountability of Daesh/ISIS (UNITAD), and domestic and international media channels.

Following a sequence of workshops and seminars conducted across various urban centers within Kurdistan and abroad, with the involvement of pertinent stakeholders from the region in 2023, the Office of the Coordinator for International Advocacy has formulated (9) initiatives spanning pertinent domains.

These encompass initiatives addressing the eradication of human trafficking, facilitation of organ donation, rehabilitation efforts, advocacy for the rights of persons with disabilities, combatting hate speech, tackling the scourge of drugs and psychotropic substances, safeguarding freedom of expression, combatting torture, and addressing gender-based violence.

The aforementioned initiatives were disseminated by the Office of the Council of Ministers' leadership to pertinent stakeholders for execution in accordance with the outlined strategy, concurrently expediting the adoption of global benchmarks at an institutional scale within the specified timeframe.

In the course of overseeing the execution of initiatives, various governmental entities including ministries, departments, and offices, alongside the judiciary and legislature, have undertaken pragmatic measures. Furthermore, efforts have been made to enhance collaboration among official bodies, encompassing diverse facets of coordination.

In regard to coordination and assistance, we have consistently engaged in consultations and dialogues with specialized entities, notably civil society, labor unions, associations, international organizations, UN representatives, diplomatic missions, other global entities, and autonomous human rights commissions. We have diligently considered the input from stakeholders, particularly in the crafting and dissemination of protocols aligning with global norms and standards.

During the execution phase of the plan, it has been observed that several impediments persist, impeding the expeditious enactment of the proposed measures. These obstacles encompass various facets such as the shared responsibility of implementation, wherein diverse ministries and agencies assume auxiliary roles.

While certain ministries and agencies are pivotal in executing the collective recommendations, effective coordination among all stakeholders is paramount. Failure to adhere to assigned roles in a synchronized manner may render the recommendations ineffectual.

Furthermore, a significant portion of the proposals within the ministries' assessment timetable are still awaiting action. The Judicial Council appears to play a contributing role in the delay of recommendation execution, particularly concerning case investigations and resolutions.

The lack of implementation of several recommendations is intricately tied to challenges in enacting or modifying legislation, which is within the purview of the government and submitted to the Kurdistan Parliament. Despite their pivotal role in furnishing legal assistance and expediting implementation processes, the international community's engagement with governmental bodies, notably consulates, lacks the desired impact due to disparities in experience and expertise.

It has been noted that these entities primarily focus on information exchange rather than substantive collaboration.

In the realm of media, heightened emphasis ought to be placed upon the primary considerations delineated within the regional blueprint across official platforms, encompassing social media, visual, auditory, and textual mediums.

The Kurdistan Regional Government's initiatives and strategies to uphold international standards warrant dissemination through symposiums, dialogues, and inclusive forums involving governmental authorities and pertinent stakeholders, thereby fostering broader public comprehension and engagement with the plan.

In the course of overseeing the execution of the recommendations, there has been a notable omission in the incorporation of the regional plan's themes into the agendas of governmental bodies, including ministries, departments, and offices, as well as the judiciary and legislature. Several recommendations pertain to the legal conformity, ratification, and adherence to international agreements within the federal government's national plan.

However, at the regional level, pertinent stakeholders have not demonstrated active engagement with the respective committees within the Iraqi government and parliament.

Several recommendations entail shared responsibility for implementation across various ministries and agencies, each assigned tasks according to their respective mandates, thereby avoiding alignment with any single ministry.

Certain ministries and agencies assume pivotal roles in the execution of these collective recommendations, while others may have a supporting role. Additionally, several recommendations await review within the ministries' schedules, as they pertain to federal jurisdiction.

On the contrary, the Judicial Council plays a pivotal role in the coordination and oversight processes. To this end, they have instituted a specialized committee aimed at facilitating the adoption of recommendations and ensuring adherence to international standards. The judiciary has been actively engaged in raising awareness and enhancing the competencies of judges and prosecutorial staff through diverse training programs, which have garnered significant participation.

While recommendations are being earnestly pursued, the scarcity of judges presents a notable challenge. As for establishing timeframes for case resolutions during the investigative phase, delays stem from the sheer volume of cases, deficient resources, and inadequate judicial personnel, all contributing to trial delays.

Throughout the execution phase of the initiative, it became evident that there exists a notable absence of synchronization between the legislative and executive (parliament and the government) branches, particularly concerning the formulation and rejection of draft legislation. This lack of cohesion frequently results in procedural delays hindering the promulgation of laws. Upon completion of the governmental stages, proposed bills are forwarded to the parliament for further scrutiny.

Within the Kurdistan parliamentary framework, an advisory committee comprising legal experts convenes to assess these bills, engaging in comprehensive deliberations to address pertinent stakeholder feedback. Such meticulous review processes, alongside parliamentary voting procedures, may inadvertently prolong the legislative process, as advised by recommendations.

In collaboration with the Foreign Relations Office and the Media and Information Office, we convened a comprehensive session with consuls and representatives from 24 nations in Erbil, aiming to elucidate the Kurdistan Regional Government's strategy concerning human rights. During the dialogue, there was a mutual exchange of views regarding the phases and measures integral to executing this strategy.

While expressing their readiness to support the KRG in its endeavors, the participants acknowledged that concrete actions towards assisting in the plan's implementation were yet to materialize.

This document offers a thorough evaluation of the progression in enacting the propositions delineated within the KRG Plan, aligning with the mandates assigned to pertinent institutions across the legislative, executive, and judicial sectors. The plan encompasses a spectrum of 400 recommendations, encompassing insights derived from the Arab League Human Rights Committee.

The sixth report, known as the (Second Year of Plan Implementation Report) offers an exhaustive and comparative evaluation of the execution of the Regional Plan recommendations by pertinent entities across the legislative, executive, and judicial sectors during the period spanning from January 2022 to December 2023.

The Executive Authority

Furthermore, alongside the 400 recommendations forwarded to the Kurdistan Regional Government, there exist 48 collaborative suggestions originating from various ministries and institutions within the Kurdistan Region, culminating in a comprehensive total of 448 recommendations directed towards the executive arm. Within the purview of 2022, (204) recommendations have been implemented, (159) have not been implemented and (85) are in the process of being implemented.

In contrast, the year 2023 witnessed a notable enhancement, with 271 recommendations successfully implemented, a reduction of 56 have not been implemented, and an increase in recommendations in the process of being implemented, totaling 121. This translates to a commendable 74.1% rate of recommendation implementation for the year 2023.

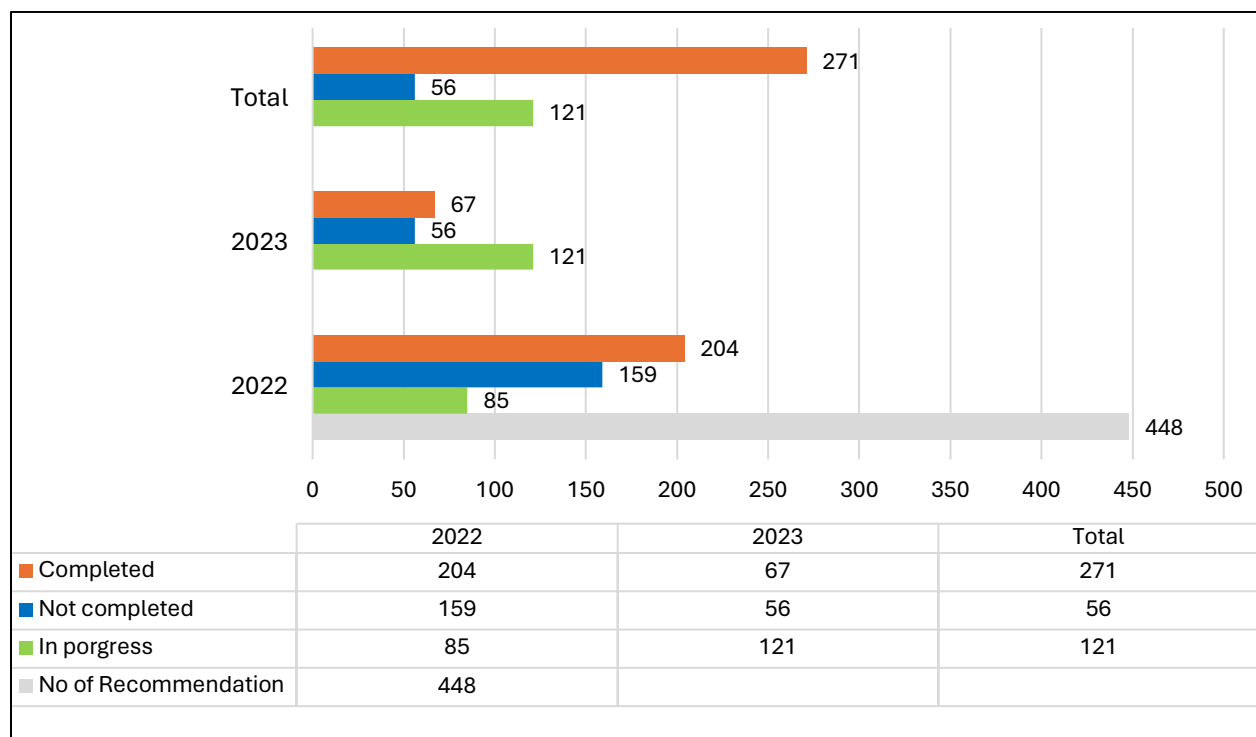


Figure-1 Number of implementation of recommendations of all ministries

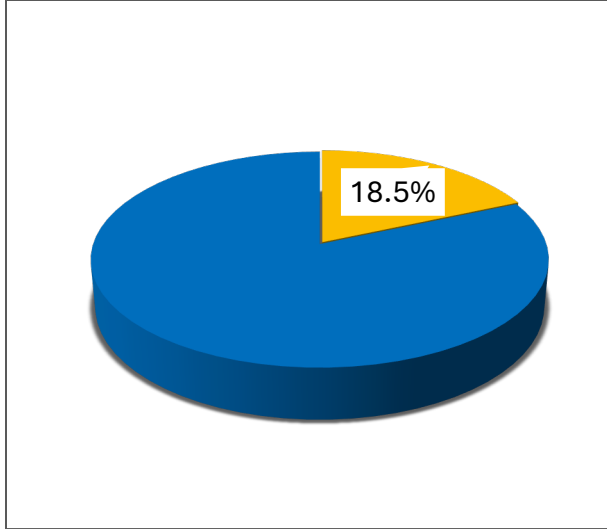


Figure-2 Rates of recommendation execution for 2022-2023

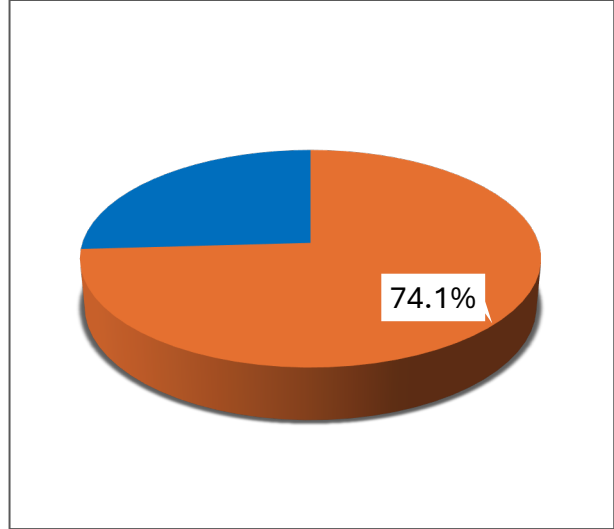


Figure-3 Effort rate of the ministry to completed the recommendations

Kurdistan Parliament

Within the purview of the Kurdistan Parliament, a total of 37 recommendations were submitted to the Kurdistan Parliament in 2022, with 7 recommendations having undergone successful implementation and 30 recommendations have not been implemented.

A comparative analysis with the preceding year, 2023, reveals an augmentation in implemented recommendations, totaling (8), alongside a decrement recommendation that has not been implemented to (22). Concurrently, recommendations in various stages of implementation were reached (7), signifying a nuanced advancement.

The discernible improvement underscores a commendable uptrend, with the implementation rate of recommendations in 2023 registering at (31.1%).

The Judiciary Council

The judicial branch received a total of 38 recommendations in 2022, of which 17 have been implemented, 13 recommendations have not been implemented, and 8 recommendations are undergoing implementation.

In comparison, the year 2023 saw a notable advancement with 21 recommendations have been implemented, 8 recommendations have not been implemented, and 9 recommendations undergoing the implementation process, resulting in an overall implementation rate of 67.1%.

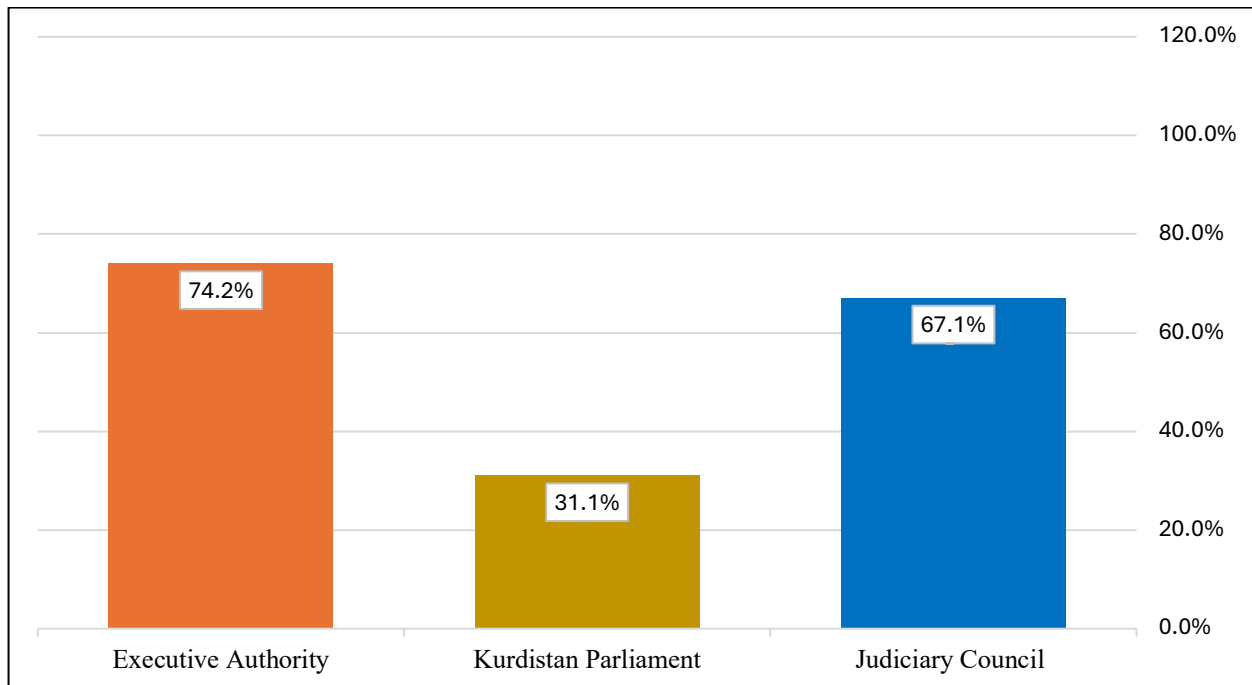


Figure-4 No. of implementation of recommendations of all three authorities

Ministry of Justice/ Prosecutor General

During the year of 2022, the Ministry of Justice/ Prosecutor General received a total of (45) recommendations. (26) recommendations were successfully implemented, while (6) were not implemented, and (13) were still undergoing the process of implementation. A comparative analysis with the subsequent year, 2023, reveals a slight improvement, with (28) recommendations having implemented. However, it is noted that the number of unexecuted recommendations has also increased marginally to (6) recommendations. Encouragingly, the number of recommendations in the implementation phase has decreased to (11) recommendations. In this regard the implementation rate becomes (74.4%)

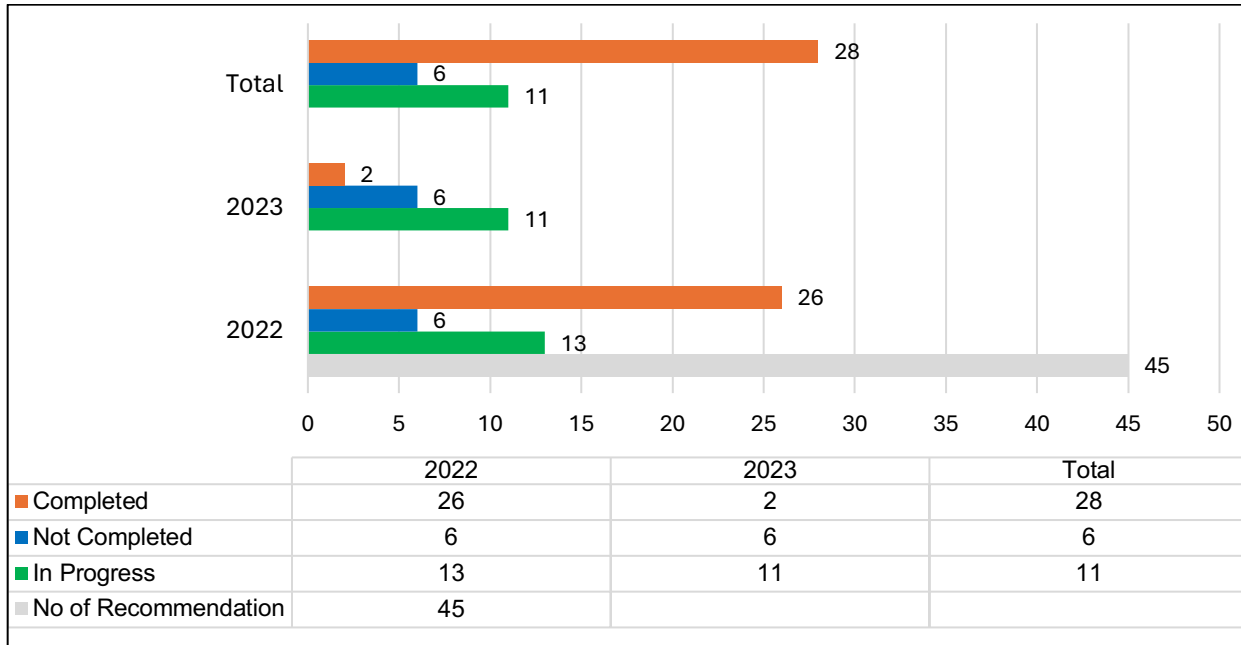


Figure 5: Implementation of Recommendations Related to the Ministry of Justice – Prosecution

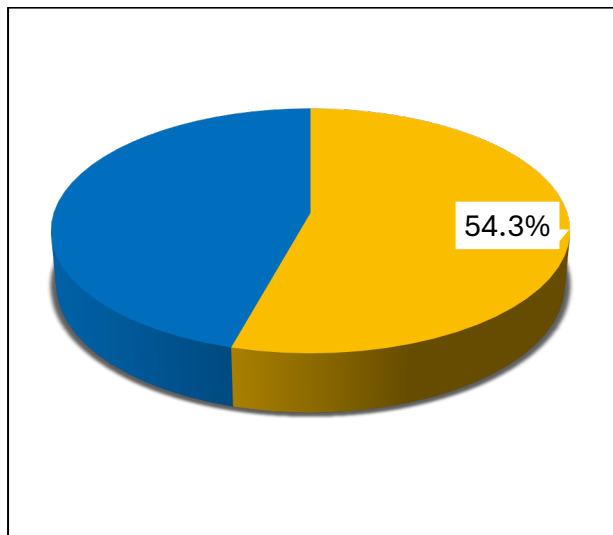


Figure-6 Rates of recommendation execution for 2022-2023

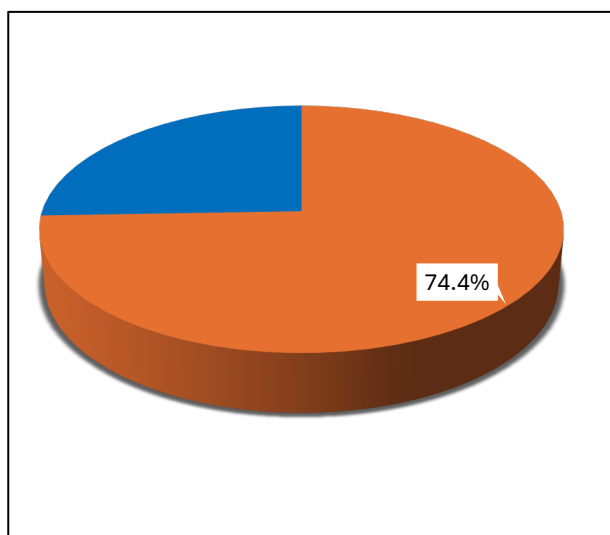


Figure-7 Effort rate of the ministry to completed the recommendations

Implemented Recommendations

1. Undertake thorough inquiries into any allegations of coercive practices throughout all stages of legal proceedings, as such actions contravene individual human rights.
2. Ensure the equitable treatment of defendants during judicial processes.
3. Strengthen initiatives aimed at fostering adherence to human rights and fundamental freedoms across all demographics, while also investigating and holding accountable those responsible for breaches of international humanitarian law and international human rights law.
4. Conduct urgent, comprehensive, and impartial examinations of incidents violating the right to life and personal safety that occurred during the period of terrorist governance in specific regions. Promptly escalate these cases to the judiciary, provide compensation to victims, and ensure full redress for their grievances.
5. Sustain endeavors to secure universal human rights in accordance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
6. Facilitate judicial proceedings for the accused while ensuring justice for victims.
7. Enact substantive measures to cultivate a judiciary characterized by integrity and independence, effectively addressing concerns regarding impunity eradication.
8. Hold members of ISIS accountable for their criminal actions.
9. Proactively mitigate racial discrimination within the criminal justice system's administration.
10. Undertake thorough and impartial investigations into allegations of crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide, ensuring independence and effectiveness in the process.
11. Initiate immediate, thorough, and unbiased inquiries into all allegations of torture and other instances of inhumane treatment.
12. Establish mechanisms for independent, transparent, and equitable investigations into acts of violence and fatalities targeting civilians amid ongoing demonstrations.
13. Safeguard the rights of journalists and other media personnel, while also ensuring the protection of human rights advocates and the unfettered engagement of civil society in political discourse, devoid of coercion or influence.
14. Undertake measures to probe infractions against human rights activists and ensure the accountability of those responsible through legal recourse.
15. Pursue legal remedies against individuals engaged in misconduct through the misuse of communication devices.
16. Heighten endeavors to combat the trafficking of women and girls, undertaking expedited and impartial investigations and prosecutions against perpetrators of such crimes.
17. Enforce legal measures against law enforcement and security personnel upon substantiation of allegations of detainee torture, ensuring accountability for any instances of ill-treatment.

18. Promptly conduct thorough and impartial inquiries into all reports of torture and other forms of mistreatment, including cases of enforced disappearance, with immediate corrective actions.
19. Implement protocols to monitor the welfare of detainees and convicts, facilitating their communication with family members and legal representation, while ensuring their legal status and whereabouts are promptly disclosed to their legal representatives.
20. Sustain endeavors to eradicate financial and administrative malfeasance.
21. Sustain endeavors to uphold the principles of legal governance and uphold the integrity of judicial proceedings by combatting malfeasance and deterring impunity.
22. Eradicate instances of violence against minors and address the underlying causes leading to their exploitation for purposes such as commercial sex trade, while diligently adhering to established protocols in this realm.
23. Safeguarding the rights of children to maintain relationships with both parents and fostering parity in parental custodial rights.
24. Eradicate the involvement of minors in armed conflict and ensure legal recourse against those implicated in such activities.
25. Ensure equitable access to legal procedures for individuals with intellectual, psychological, or social disabilities, incorporating considerations of gender and age appropriateness.
26. Uphold the principles of due process delineated in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, ensuring detainees' access to legal representation and opportunities for defense.
27. Enforce comprehensive accountability measures and pursue requisite legal actions concerning grave breaches of human rights.
28. Enforce compliance with directives issued to all real estate registration entities, including the suspension of transactions within areas under the influence of armed extremist factions.

Unmet Recommendations

1. Addressing the imperative of finding a comprehensive resolution to the complex situation concerning children born to fathers associated with extremist groups and mothers from minority communities, ensuring the safeguarding of non-Muslim individuals until they reach adulthood.
2. Implementing robust measures to prevent instances of mistreatment in all settings where individuals with disabilities are detained, encompassing mental health facilities, correctional institutions, long-term care facilities, rehabilitation centers, and assisted living residences.
3. Instituting legal measures to prosecute individuals responsible for perpetrating acts of violence against persons with disabilities, thereby upholding the principles of justice and equality.

4. Establishing effective oversight mechanisms to preclude occurrences of torture and other forms of abusive treatment across all environments where individuals with disabilities are deprived of their liberty, ensuring adherence to international human rights standards.
5. Instituting rigorous monitoring protocols to mitigate the risk of torture and other forms of degrading treatment in all circumstances where individuals with disabilities are deprived of their freedom, encompassing mental health institutions, correctional facilities, nursing homes, rehabilitation centers, and assisted living facilities.
6. Institute an effective mechanism for the enforcement of pertinent legislation within the region.

Recommendations Under-Implementation

1. Conduct a comprehensive review of legal provisions pertaining to criminal offenses to expedite trial proceedings, thereby mitigating prolonged periods of pre-trial detention. It is imperative to prevent the routine use of precautionary detention and to ensure prompt presentation of detainees or arrested individuals before judicial authorities, in accordance with established legal protocols. (Following the enactment of the 2005 Iraqi Constitution, the exclusive authority for the presentation of detainees lies with judges, as opposed to duly authorized personnel in judicial capacities.)
2. Undertake all requisite measures to liberate women and girls currently held captive by terrorist factions and to prosecute those responsible for their unlawful captivity.
3. Establish a robust monitoring mechanism aimed at preempting instances of torture and other forms of inhumane treatment in settings where individuals with disabilities are deprived of their liberty. Simultaneously, institute a streamlined grievance redressal mechanism accessible to persons with disabilities.
4. Heighten endeavors to safeguard the integrity of journalism and investigate individuals leveraging the journalistic profession for activities detrimental to national security. Ensuring impunity is not granted to such individuals remains paramount.
5. Initiate an independent and transparent inquiry into allegations of excessive force employed during the dispersal of peaceful demonstrations, with a commitment to prosecute those implicated in physical assaults or violations of human dignity during such events.
6. Reinforce existing national mechanisms aimed at preventing domestic violence and ensuring comprehensive protection for all victims thereof.
7. Persist in enforcing legislation against female genital mutilation and curbing the proliferation of this harmful practice until its eradication.
8. Intensify endeavors to eliminate intersecting forms of discrimination experienced by women and girls with disabilities. Targeted measures are warranted, particularly in rural locales, among displaced, refugee, or immigrant populations, and within various ethnic, religious, or linguistic communities.
9. Guarantee expedient and secure avenues to justice and restitution for victims of torture, facilitating their recourse in the event of any criminal transgression.

10. Foster an environment conducive for victims to report violations, ensuring full recompense and adequate safeguarding measures.
11. Ensure comprehensive compensation coverage for all individuals subjected to unwarranted or unlawful detention or arrest, particularly those acquitted through final judgments.

Below are the measures, laws, guidelines, procedures, and practical steps taken in implementing the international recommendations:

Formation of the Bureau of Criminal Research and Inquiry

In furtherance of the endeavors of the Prosecutor General aimed at safeguarding public interests and eradicating instances of fiscal and administrative malfeasance, a decision was reached on 1/11/2022 to establish the Directorate of Criminal Studies and Investigation under the auspices of the Prosecutor General's Office. Presently, concerted efforts are being made towards the nomination of a competent board to undertake the requisite duties and responsibilities thereof.

The 2023 quantity of cases brought forth by the Attorney General stands at:

- The petitions reviewed by the Crime Commission total (506).
- The applications reviewed by the Juvenile Board amount to (584).

Statistics from the Prosecutor's Office for the year 2023 reveal the following:

- The number of cases related to drugs is (3535) cases.
- The number of cases related to administrative corruption is (475) cases.
- The number of cases pertaining to the owner of special needs is (14).
- The number of cases involving journalists is (12).
- The number of cases related to terrorism and espionage is (689) cases.
- The number of cases related to joining terrorist groups is (177) cases.

Ensuring the safeguarding of the rights of the accused

Efforts have been made to institute appropriate mechanisms, both administrative and legal, to ensure the protection of the rights of the accused, exemplified by the following measures:

- Upon a court's decision to detain an accused individual following charges, a supervised process ensues where the accused is transferred to a specialized unit under the oversight of the prosecutor general.
- Upon arrival, the accused undergoes a thorough physical examination tailored to their gender and age, conducted by a qualified medical professional or their assistant. Any

evidence of trauma or signs of torture, if present, are meticulously documented in a specialized medical dossier.

- In instances where the initial medical assessment reveals indications of torture, the administrative unit responsible for prison affairs promptly notifies the relevant authorities in the detention and transportation department. Subsequently, the prosecutor is summoned, and both the report and accompanying documentation are duly recorded for further action.
- Following the completion of these procedures, the Chief Prosecutor is duly informed to initiate legal proceedings against the individual implicated in the alleged transgression. All pertinent evidence, including any complaints of mistreatment, is meticulously gathered and presented for review, or alternatively, the matter is expediently referred to the competent judicial body for adjudication.
- Between December 2023 and June 2023, the Prosecutor General diligently scrutinized the circumstances surrounding 826 detainees across various correctional facilities within the Kurdistan Region.
- Through collaborative efforts between the Prosecutor General's Office and the Independent Human Rights Commission, a structured framework has been established and enacted to address the apprehension and subsequent release on bail of defendants, in accordance with the provisions delineated in Articles (109, 110, and 111) of the Criminal Procedure Law. This framework specifically pertains to cases warranting a sentence not exceeding three (3) years.

Registration of real estate in conflict-affected regions

- In the course of adjudicating cases involving individuals affiliated with ISIL from early 2014 onwards, a significant cohort of such individuals has been detained and subsequently subjected to legal repercussions within these territories. Pursuant to the relevant legal frameworks, both tangible and intangible assets belonging to these convicts are subject to forfeiture by the prosecuting authority once judicial decisions are finalized.

Survivors of the crimes of terrorist ISIS

- Efforts to address the complex situation of children born to ISIS-affiliated fathers and Yazidi mothers have not yet resulted in the enactment of comprehensive legislation to address their unique religious and ethnic circumstances.

Entitlement to Compensation

- Following meticulous scrutiny and thorough inquiry into compensation petitions within the Committee for Receiving Compensation Claims under the auspices of the Presidency of the Regional Courts of Appeal, it has been observed that instances arise wherein notification to the representative of the Prosecutor General is omitted in matters pertaining to public assets. Consequently, in accordance with the provisions delineated in Article 14 of Law No. 159 of 1979, pertaining to the Prosecutor General's jurisdiction, as amended, the Prosecutor General, in April 2023, formally petitioned the Judicial Council to issue a comprehensive directive to the Presidency of the Court of Appeal in the Kurdistan Region, duly highlighting the necessity thereof.

Addressing Human Trafficking

Initiatives aimed at addressing human trafficking underscore the synchronization of domestic legislation with global norms. International stakeholders are advocating for essential statutory revisions to comprehensively tackle this challenge. Training programs, consciousness-raising endeavors, and bolstering support mechanisms for victims constitute integral components of the monitoring and assessment procedures within official agencies.

The incidences documented in the year 2021 amounted to a total of 192 cases, with 17 of these cases having reached resolution, 147 cases have been forwarded for judicial deliberation, and 28 cases undergoing investigation. Similarly, in the following year 2022, 211 cases were reported, with 15 cases having reached a resolution, 63 cases have been referred for legal adjudication, and 73 cases undergoing investigation. Furthermore, in the calendar year 2023, a total of 294 cases were registered, out of which 54 have been resolved, 55 have been forwarded for judicial deliberation, and the remainder have been successfully resolved through alternative means.

Regulation of Media Operations

In accordance with the directive issued by the Prosecutor General's Office, it is imperative that all media outlets and online platforms exercise prudence in disseminating news and information, ensuring accuracy and substantiation in their reporting on incidents. Premature and erroneous interpretations of events, as well as interviews with the relatives of victims, are discouraged in line with the provisions outlined in Article 236, Section 1 of Iraqi Penal Code No. 111 of 1969, as amended, which holds applicability within the Kurdistan Region. Failure to adhere to these standards may result in legal consequences, as violations of pertinent laws and regulations will be subject to prosecution by the Public Rights Commission under the authority of the Prosecutor General.

Prevention of underage marriage

In addressing instances of juvenile matrimony, coerced unions, and interim unions, the prosecutor general initiates legal actions against infringements of communal entitlements. Throughout 2023, the prosecutor's office meticulously scrutinized 313 incidents of premature marriage.

Pursue legal recourse against instances of torture and ill-treatment

With respect to pursuing legal recourse against law enforcement and security personnel implicated in the alleged mistreatment of detainees, the prosecutor general shall initiate appropriate legal measures. It is imperative that allegations of torture, particularly within women's and juvenile correctional facilities, are meticulously investigated. In the year 2023, a total of 28 cases concerning accusations of torture were meticulously documented by the prosecutor's office and subsequently referred to the investigative court for thorough examination.

Prohibition of begging

In accordance with the recent revision of the Juvenile Welfare Act (Event Protection Act No. 76 of 1983) as stipulated in Law No. (5) of 2022, the Prosecutor General's Office, in collaboration with provincial law enforcement agencies, diligently endeavors to address the issue of begging. In pursuit of this objective, the number of incidents pertaining to begging registered in 2023 amounted to (327) cases.

Addressing prejudice and racial inequality

Addressing discrimination and racism is a pivotal focus area for the pertinent authorities of the Kurdistan Regional Government. Consequently, in the pursuit of this objective, a total of (8) cases were diligently scrutinized in 2023.

Addressing the issue of the sex trade

The illicit activity of sex trafficking is firmly addressed within the purview of the Human Trafficking Act, with prosecutions brought forth against perpetrators. In the year 2021, legal proceedings resulted in the conviction of 6 individuals implicated in this crime. Furthermore, in the year 2023, a total of 12 cases were diligently investigated concerning charges related to sex trafficking.

Addressing Domestic Violence

The Attorney General examines instances of domestic violence. Each allegation undergoes thorough review by the reconciliation board prior to being formally presented to the judiciary. Subsequently, the findings are presented to the court for consideration, allowing the reconciliation board to conclude cases in instances of insufficient evidence or successful mediation.

2023 Data on Incidents of Domestic Violence:

Table 1 Number of domestic violence cases in the prosecutor's office

2023 Data on Incidents of Domestic Violence:		
Number of applications	Misdemeanor Court	1733
	Court of Inquiry	16887
The total		18620
Number of cases settled	Misdemeanor Court	1071
	Court of Inquiry	9826
The total		10897

Violence statistics by gender

Table 2 Number of domestic violence statistics by gender

Number of Cases	Gender	
	Female	Male
1086	496	590

The causes of violence registered in the Violence Prevention Centers and Offices in 2023 were as follows:

Table 3 Statistics on causes of domestic violence

Marital status	Married	991
	Single	84
Type of violence	Physical	319
	Psychological	423
	Sexy	21
	Others	307
Causes of violence	Father	40
	Mother	21
	Brother	50
	Partner	759
	Others	230
Financial position	Poverty	208
	Medium	368
	Good	511
Educational Level	Uneducated	161
	Educated	925

Death penalty and commutation

- In the year 2023, a total of (229) individuals were subjected to capital punishment, as per the stipulations outlined in Article (406) of the Iraqi Penal Code No. (111) of 1969. This figure comprises (215) male and (14) female convicts.
- Furthermore, one female inmate was granted clemency through collaborative efforts between the Women and Juvenile Reform Division and the Prosecutor General's Office. This commendable action leveraged the authority vested in the President of the Kurdistan Region, as articulated in Article 10, Clause 7 of the Constitution of the Kurdistan Region No. (1) of 2005. Under this provision, the President of the Kurdistan Region possesses the prerogative to commute capital sentences to life imprisonment.

Required actions to enact the directives outlined by the Ministry of Justice/Prosecutor General

Following a sequence of workshops and roundtable discussions, the Office of the Coordinator for International Advocacy has devised specific protocols. These protocols have been officially conveyed by the Office of the Prime Minister to pertinent stakeholders, including the Prosecutor General, with the aim of aligning with international recommendations within the designated timeframe stipulated by the overarching plan.

Dedicated to the elimination of domestic violence.

Committed to eradicating instances of domestic violence, it is imperative to enhance the operational efficacy of the prosecutor's office, ensuring its pivotal role in the proactive deterrence of such incidents. Thus, an amendment to Prosecutor's Office Law No. 159 of 1979 is warranted, aligning with its core mission to safeguard the welfare of families and children.

Committed to the eradication of torture and inhumane treatment:

- Upon receiving allegations of torture against any investigative party, it is imperative that the complainant and the case concerning the torture complaint be promptly referred to the investigating judge or judicial investigator for thorough examination under the oversight of a specialized prosecutor, who holds immunity by virtue of their professional capacity.
- It is essential to ensure that any statements obtained under duress are categorically dismissed by the court. The burden of proving that the accused's statements were obtained arbitrarily should rest squarely upon the prosecution. Furthermore, it is essential to elevate the involvement of forensic experts in resolving torture complaints.
- Personnel assigned to detention, custody, transfer, and correctional facilities must diligently review reports prepared by medical units following physical examinations. Any complaints should be swiftly and efficiently processed to uphold procedural fairness.
- It is advisable to conduct tailored training sessions aimed at combating torture and inhumane treatment for forensic investigators, prosecution members, and all other relevant stakeholders involved in investigations. These training programs should be meticulously coordinated with the Judicial Council, pertinent entities, and organizations.
- Initiating specialized training sessions for investigative authorities and correctional supervisors, facilitated by judges, prosecutors, and other experts. These sessions should focus on effective methodologies for handling detainees and convicts in a humane and lawful manner.

Committed to safeguarding the principles of freedom of expression and information accessibility.

- Advocate for the full enforcement of the Journalism Act No. 35 of 2007, ensuring transparency and collaboration with the journalists' union in the handling of journalistic cases.
- Facilitate timely and thorough inquiries, in conjunction with the Judicial Council and pertinent stakeholders, into claims of torture and mistreatment directed at journalists and members of civil society.
- Initiate independent, transparent, and unbiased investigations into allegations of physical aggression or affronts to individual dignity targeting civilian demonstrators during public gatherings.
- Foster dialogue with the Judicial Council and relevant governmental bodies to develop a nuanced definition of defamation, striking a balance that aligns with legal principles.

Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs

Out of the (19) recommendations submitted to the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs in 2022, (11) recommendations have been implemented, (5) recommendations have not been implemented and (3) recommendations were in the process of implementation. Compared to 2023, the number of implemented recommendations increased to (13) recommendations, the number of non-implemented recommendations decreased to (4) recommendations, and the number of recommendations under implementation reached (2) recommendations. In this regard the implementation rate becomes (73.7%)

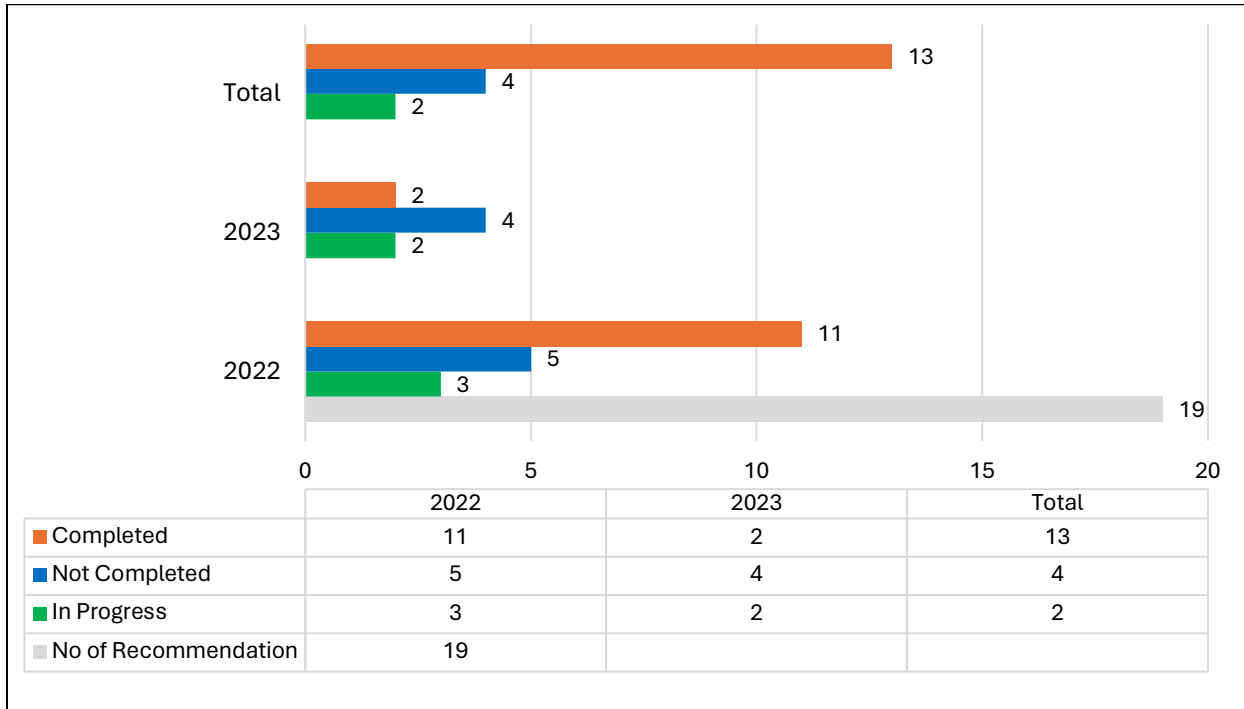


Figure 8: Implementation of Recommendations Related to the Ministry of Justice – Prosecution

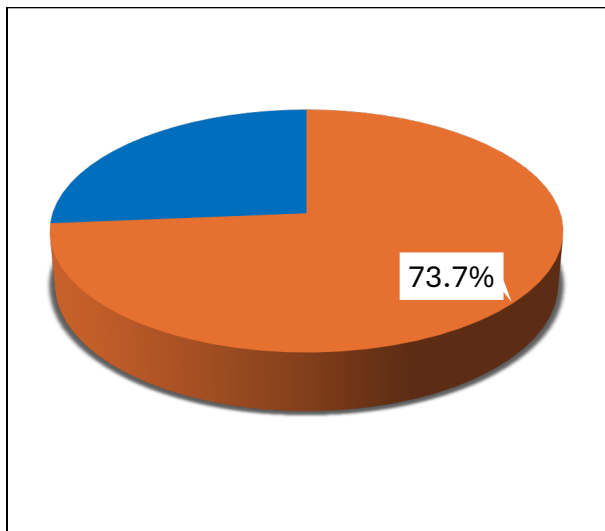


Figure-9 Rates of recommendation execution for 2022-2023

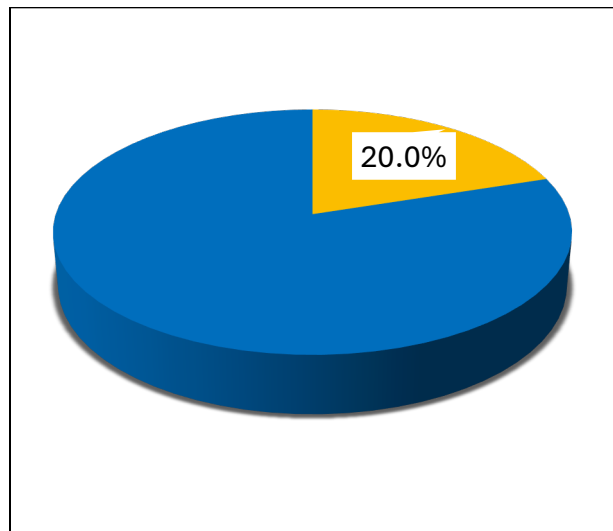


Figure-10 Effort rate of the ministry to completed the recommendations

Implemented Recommendations

1. Take all necessary measures to liberation the women and girls currently under the control of terrorist armed factions, with the aim of ensuring due process for the perpetrators.
2. Address the illicit provisioning of arms to minors and their recruitment into armed conflicts through appropriate punitive measures.
3. The Committee advocates for the Member State to undertake all essential actions to shield children from violence and sexual exploitation, liberate all children detained by the terrorist entity ISIL, facilitate their reunion with their families, and furnish them with psychological support services. It is advised to allocate adequate human, technological, and financial resources to foster the operations of alternative care facilities and associated child safeguarding services, aiming at the rehabilitation and reintegration of entrusted children into their familial and societal settings.
4. Take all necessary measures to facilitate the rescue of the Yazidis and individuals whose whereabouts remain undisclosed.
5. Strengthen initiatives aimed at upholding human rights and fundamental freedoms for all communities and undertake thorough investigations and appropriate punitive actions against perpetrators of breaches of international humanitarian and human rights statutes.
6. Take all necessary measures to safeguard civilians during military endeavors targeting combat against armed extremist factions, with paramount consideration given to civilian protection, while respecting both the principles of discrimination and appropriateness.
7. Take additional strides to foster comprehensive and purposeful engagement of women in national reconciliation endeavors.
8. Cease the enlistment of minors in armed activities and ensure their exemption from participation in conflicts, with strict legal enforcement against those involved in such transgressions.
9. Liberate children held in captivity by ISIS and facilitate their reunification with their families.
10. Sustain endeavors to provide sanctuary and humanitarian relief to internally displaced persons due to domestic strife, particularly women and children, within the framework of international human rights and humanitarian statutes.
11. Sustain endeavors aimed at enhancing the education and training of law enforcement personnel concerning human rights standards and pertinent international humanitarian law within their professional domain, encompassing both military and security realms.
12. Advocate for transitional justice mechanisms facilitating the pursuit of truth and restitution for victims, while ensuring culpability for transgressions against human rights and international humanitarian law.
13. The ramifications of armed conflict and related acts of violence against civilian communities, resulting in displacement within the Member State, disproportionately affect individuals with disabilities, manifesting in heightened incidences of injuries

amidst conflict and insufficient access to fundamental services, particularly notable within the Kurdistan Region.

Unmet Recommendations

1. Execution of the provisions outlined in Law No. 75 in 2015 concerning Compensation for Victims of War Operations, Military Errors, and Terrorist.
2. The implementation of Article 140 of the Federal Constitution represents a constructive stride toward fostering national cohesion, and reconciliation and bolstering security stability in the specified regions. This initiative holds promise for addressing longstanding tensions and promoting harmonious relations among diverse ethnic and minority communities.
3. Ensuring comprehensive restitution and judicial recourse for individuals affected by the presence of armed terrorist factions in various regions.
4. Expediting the legal and political processes aimed at resolving conflicts in designated areas to safeguard the rights of communities. It is imperative for the state to actively engage with ethnic and religious groups inhabiting these conflict-ridden zones to facilitate their participation in the resolution efforts.

Recommendations Under Consideration for Implementation:

1. Give precedence to the mechanisms aimed at fostering national reconciliation and transitional justice. This entails formulating a comprehensive strategy to address human rights infractions perpetrated by all entities involved in the armed conflict.
2. Foster collaboration with pertinent international and regional entities adept at promptly addressing the challenges pertaining to Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). Additionally, solicit support from civil society stakeholders for financial and logistical aid in the reconstruction of regions liberated from armed extremist factions, thereby facilitating the voluntary repatriation of IDPs to their respective homelands.

Facilitating National Reconciliation

Per the agreement between the Kurdistan Regional Government and the federal government aimed at fostering security stability in conflict zones, particularly following the events of October 16, 2017, which gave rise to security vulnerabilities in said regions, recent initiatives have seen heightened cooperation between the Peshmerga forces and the Iraqi army. Specifically, the establishment of 6 coordination centers has been undertaken, with 2 central hubs located in Erbil and Baghdad, complemented by 4 satellite centers in Diyala, Kirkuk, Makhmur, and Kesik. These measures, alongside collaborative military operations, have resulted in the neutralization of numerous ISIL operatives and a notable enhancement of security stability across these territories.

Unification of joint brigades and the role of allies in assisting the Peshmerga forces

Regarding the amalgamation of joint brigades and the supportive contribution of allied partners to fortify the Peshmerga forces, the 20th Brigade, comprising exclusively of Peshmerga personnel, has received disbursements for three remunerations and successfully undergone training sessions. Presently, efforts are directed towards furnishing the requisite equipment and outfitting military installations at Habaniya, Kiwan, Taji, and Kesk. This preparatory phase is anticipated to span 45 days, following which the brigade will be suitably equipped to assume responsibilities in regions experiencing security deficiencies.

Per the memorandum of understanding dated March 17, 2023, a total of twenty-five brigades have formally integrated into the oversight of the Ministry of Peshmerga. Furthermore, five additional brigades are presently undergoing the integration process. Additionally, two divisions have been established, with eight of the aforementioned twenty-five brigades falling under the purview of these divisions. The execution of the memorandum will persist, with the ultimate objective of incorporating all forces, numbering between seventy and eighty, under the authority of the Ministry of Peshmerga by the year 2026, thereby ensuring the absence of any independently aligned forces.

In regard to the involvement of allied nations, the United States government, represented by the Pentagon, has formalized an agreement via a memorandum of understanding with the Ministry of Peshmerga, offering tangible and intangible support to bolster the capabilities of the Peshmerga forces.

Germany has graciously extended both tangible and intangible aid to the Ministry of Peshmerga. Among the notable contributions are the establishment of a state-of-the-art (modern Peshmerga hospital) and the initiation of numerous educational programs aimed at fostering awareness and personal development. Italy, the Netherlands, Britain, and France, on the other hand, serve as steadfast advocates for the Peshmerga forces, offering invaluable moral support and providing advisory assistance to the esteemed Ministry of Peshmerga.

United Brigades of the Kurdistan Peshmerga Forces:

Table 4 Number of consolidated brigades

Number of United Brigades
25 brigades have merged under the umbrella of the Ministry of Peshmerga
5 brigades are in the process of restoring the Peshmerga Ministry

Countering armed terrorist organizations

In pursuit of enhanced security and stability within the region, the Peshmerga forces and the Iraqi army have consistently engaged in collaborative operations along the frontline, particularly in areas identified with security vulnerabilities. Notably, on the 20th of August 2023, the 22nd Infantry Brigade of the Peshmerga Ministry, in conjunction with the Iraqi army, executed a strategic operation within the Qara-Hassan and Laylan region. This operation, marked by the comprehensive involvement of all units within the 22nd Infantry Brigade of the Peshmerga Ministry, focused on neutralizing threats emanating from several villages including Jawalbor,

Cham Zangana, Qishlakh Kon, Khadr Beg, as well as strategic border terrain. Concurrently, forces from the 31st Brigade of the 8th Division of the Iraqi Army conducted thorough sweeps extending from the Shirin Dam towards the Jawalbor Heights and along the primary Kirkuk-Sulaimani thoroughfare.

The Ministry of Peshmerga has played a crucial role in the digitalization initiative and in furnishing pertinent information to the UN team tasked with investigating the activities of ISIS. As a key security entity, the Ministry of Peshmerga has been at the forefront of efforts to combat ISIS extremism. A substantial corpus of data, evidence, documentation, videos, witness testimonies, and numerous other sources have proven invaluable in prosecuting individuals affiliated with ISIS. On March 17, 2021, in response to the UNITAD Team's request for information and footage pertaining to ISIS atrocities, the Intelligence Directorate of the Ministry of Peshmerga dispatched CDs, USB drives, and documents. Subsequently, on March 18, 2021, this comprehensive dossier was delivered to the UNITAD Team as per their request.

Transgressions across regional borders

The incursions and military actions conducted by both Iranian and Turkish forces within border regions have resulted in casualties and infrastructural losses, notably within the vicinity of the border. The recorded incidents of such breaches in 2023 amounted to (16) martyrs and (31) injuries, while the casualties inflicted by the PKK numbered (23) fatalities and (19) injuries, delineated as follows:

Table 5 of Damages of Border Violations

Damages of border violations by Turkey and Iran in 2022 and 2023		
2022	Civilian casualties	Number of martyrs (16)
		Number of injured (31)
	The PKK group	Number of killed (16)
		Number of injured (18)
2023	Civilian casualties	Number of martyrs (None)
		Number of injured (None)
	The PKK group	Number of killed (7)
		Number of injured (1)

ISIS casualties as a result of air strikes by the international coalition and the Iraqi army:

Table 6 Damage caused by ISIS through exposure to air strikes

2022	Number of attacks	26
	Number of killed	22
	Number of injured	None
	Number of locations	25
2023	Number of attacks	8
	Number of killed	11
	Number of injured	None
	Number of locations	9

Total attack (34) hits

Total casualties of ISIS (33) killed.

Total number of bombed sites (34).

Neutralize the remaining elements of the extremist group ISIS.

The ongoing efforts to counter the extremist activities of the ISIL group represent a primary focus for the Kurdistan Peshmerga Forces, with continuous operations aimed at this objective.

In June 2023, within the Najul district, the 16th Infantry Brigade, supported by the engineering unit of the Support Forces Command 2, successfully secured various armaments, munitions, and spare components attributed to ISIS. Additionally, the unit effectively neutralized a quantity of explosive devices and mortar ordnance.

To address and neutralize the residual presence of individuals associated with the ISIS extremist group within the region, periodic observations have been made regarding their activities. On the 28th of May 2023, a coordinated operation was conducted jointly by the Peshmerga forces and the Iraqi army along the border areas encompassing the second and fourth fronts of the Peshmerga forces. The operation encompassed the reconnaissance and search efforts across various localities, including but not limited to: Kani-Shirin, Kani-Qamar, Dwanza-Imams, Tlshan-Heights, Quri-Chai, Kani-Shrinka, Karez-Hushtar-Mla, Balway-Xwaro, Qom-Balak, Reza, Qala, and Haji-Ali villages.

Enforce gun regulations and eliminate the arming of children

- In relation to the registration of firearms, the High Committee for the Enforcement of Law No. (2) on Firearms in the Kurdistan Region convened a session attended by the Deputy Chief of Staff for Administration and Mir, Senior Advisor to the Ministry of Peshmerga, Chief of Military Court One, Representatives from the 70th and 80th Peshmerga Forces Command, and delegates from all other security entities in the Kurdistan Region. The gathering underscored the importance of adhering to the protocols for firearm registration. These measures are aimed at facilitating the registration, licensing, and safeguarding of the rights of the Peshmerga.
- The President of the Military Court recently hosted a seminar addressing the effective implementation of Arms Law No. (2) of 2022 within the Kurdistan Region. This seminar was specifically tailored for legal advisors and administrative officers across various general directorates within the Ministry, as well as officers within the Peshmerga Ministry. The primary focus of the seminar was to provide comprehensive guidance on the proper organization and registration protocols for all firearms acquired by the Peshmerga, including the responsibilities incumbent upon ranks and officers in utilizing these arms for military purposes. Legal intricacies pertaining to these procedures were meticulously elucidated. Additionally, emphasis was placed on the imperative for timely registration of all firearms and similar armaments, with a categorical prohibition against the possession of any illegal weaponry underscored.

In accordance with the provisions delineated in Law 38 of 2007 concerning the Peshmerga Service and Pension Regulations, it is mandated by Article 8 of the aforementioned legislation that individuals seeking enlistment within the Peshmerga forces must attain a minimum age of 18 years. Furthermore, Article 38 expressly stipulates that the conferral of employment status within the organization shall be reserved solely for individuals who have attained the age of twenty or above.

Law on Compensation for Victims of War Operations and Military Errors

Legislation pertaining to the indemnification of individuals affected by wartime operations, military miscalculations, and acts of terrorism, as encapsulated in Law No. 57 of 2015, has undergone revisions. Presently, the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs has appointed a delegate to partake in the deliberations of the Committee on Compensation for Victims of War and Military Misjudgments within the Council of Ministers. However, there are concerns regarding the operational efficacy of this committee.

Training in the principles of international humanitarian law and international human rights law

In furtherance of upholding the principles of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, and as part of the ongoing curriculum established by the Military Training Directorate of the Ministry of Peshmerga, under the auspices of coalition forces in 2023, the following courses and training sessions were undertaken:

- The Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs, in collaboration with the International Committee of the Red Cross, is embarking on a three-year initiative aimed at enhancing the understanding and implementation of humanitarian laws within the Peshmerga forces. This project seeks to foster greater synergy and collaboration between the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs. Furthermore, the initiative will entail the training and preparation of new instructors to deliver comprehensive courses on the integration of international human rights law within Peshmerga operations.
- The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) convened a seminar titled "Law of Armed Conflict" for the officers and personnel of the National Awareness Department within the 11th Infantry Brigade of the Ministry of Peshmerga. Through a series of lectures and discussions, the fundamental tenets and regulations governing the law of armed conflict were elucidated to the attendees of the seminar.
- The seminars pertaining to the law of armed conflict represent a collaborative initiative between the Ministry of Peshmerga and the International Committee of the Red Cross. This program encompasses all brigades and units within the ministry and is set to endure into the future.
- On the dates of 7th and 8th of March 2023, in partnership with the Qurtuba Institute for Peace - Geneva, the Office of the Coordinator for International Advocacy facilitated a workshop focused on (International Humanitarian Law and Mechanisms for Safeguarding Civilians from Disappearance Amidst Military Conflicts). This session, attended by 25 esteemed officers and personnel, was convened in Erbil with the aim of fostering discourse and understanding on the aforementioned subject matter.

- Training sessions were facilitated for personnel of the (1) and (2) Infantry Divisions focusing on Decision-Making methodologies. A cohort of 29 officers engaged in sessions tailored to enhance their prowess in strategic decision-making, particularly concerning military advancements and developments.
- At the Duhok Infantry Training Base, a comprehensive training program was organized for the 3rd Battalion of the 21st Brigade. Participants engaged in a structured curriculum encompassing both physical and theoretical aspects grounded in contemporary military doctrine.
- An enhanced instructional program was undertaken for Battalion (3) of Brigade (10) at the esteemed Sulaimani Infantry Training Base. This comprehensive course spanned a duration of six weeks, during which participants were provided with both practical and theoretical instruction. Additionally, emphasis was placed on fostering an understanding of human rights legislation and contemporary military methodologies.
- To safeguard against hazardous gases and deploy specialized apparatus while donning chemical protective gear for the detection and mitigation of toxic agents during the conflict, the commanding officer of Italian forces stationed in the Kurdistan Region has initiated, over a span of two weeks, two fundamental training sessions tailored for a cohort of officers and personnel affiliated with the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs.
- The engagement of delegates from the Legal Office of the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs in a two-month program at the Judicial Institute, focusing on the realms of (arbitration initiatives, anti-corruption endeavors, and integrity practices) both in theoretical and practical dimensions.
- In 2023, an extensive cohort exceeding 400 Peshmerga personnel alongside members of the Ministry of Peshmerga underwent comprehensive training facilitated by the National Awareness Directorate, focusing on matters pertaining to human rights and humanitarian concerns.

Protection of civilians during periods of peace and conflict

- The approach adopted by the Ministry of Peshmerga in this domain revolves around safeguarding civilians amidst both peace and conflict. By 2022, it will have been integrated into the curriculum across all training facilities. However, recognizing the necessity for further enhancement in Peshmerga forces' capabilities, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Iraq conducted a seminar tailored for a select group of officers from the 22nd Infantry Brigade. This seminar delved into the principles of international humanitarian law, elucidating the protocols governing armed conflicts, aiming to ensure the protection of civilians, including the sick and prisoners of war, with meticulous attention to their unique requirements.
- To facilitate the exchange of legal perspectives and interpretations concerning pertinent legislation within the purview of the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs of the Kurdistan Regional Government and the Federal Ministry of Defense, a distinguished legal delegation from the Ministry of Peshmerga embarked on a diplomatic visit to Germany. Over the course of two days, they engaged in constructive dialogue alongside esteemed legal advisors

from the German Federal Ministry of Defense and other senior legal authorities. The discussions centered on elucidating the respective legal frameworks of both entities while emphasizing the adherence to principles of human rights in the lawful conduct of military operations in armed conflict situations.

Enrollment of individuals with disabilities within the ranks of the Peshmerga forces

In pursuit of enhancing inclusivity and bolstering support systems for individuals with disabilities, recent developments indicate the establishment of a specialized committee within the Ministry of Peshmerga. This committee has undertaken the evaluation of (9578) individuals with disabilities. Following deliberation by the High Medical Committee, it has been determined that (4664) individuals have fulfilled the requisite criteria for enrollment, while (3384) have yet to meet the stipulated criteria as persons with disabilities. Additionally, (1539) individuals are currently serving without impediments. However, (63) individuals failed to attend their scheduled assessments. Furthermore, (651) individuals have lodged objections regarding their inclusion status within the 70th unit, with an additional (697) individuals contesting their placement within the 80th unit.

Facilitate essential healthcare provisions for Peshmerga personnel and their families

The Ministry of Health within the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) has designated a team of 20 specialized surgeons to collaborate with the Peshmerga Hospital in delivering comprehensive medical and surgical care to Peshmerga members and their families, including individuals who have been injured or disabled.

The establishment of the Peshmerga Hospital stands as a testament to the collaborative efforts between the German government and the Peshmerga forces, embodying a significant milestone in bilateral relations. This initiative underscores the commitment of the Federal Government of Germany to support the Ministry of Peshmerga within the Kurdistan Regional Government.

Prevention of violence against women

In the pursuit of curbing violence against women within the framework of a 15-day initiative targeting this issue, a workshop was convened at the National Awareness Department, hosted at the headquarters of the 6th Infantry Brigade. The purpose of this workshop was to foster a deeper comprehension of women's rights and to devise strategies for combatting violence against women. Attendees included a cohort of officers and Peshmergas affiliated with the 6th Infantry Brigade.

Training, enlightenment, and capability development of officers in countering narcotics and psychotropic substances.

- On the dates spanning from November 11th to November 14th, 2023, the Office of the Coordinator for International Advocacy, in partnership with Accepting Others Organization (AOO), UN WOMEN, and the Italian Development Agency, convened a workshop aimed at bolstering the proficiency of officers in addressing gender-based violence and substance

misuse. The objective was to furnish additional training and awareness to augment the competence of security personnel, and Ministry of Peshmerga officers, and to fortify the media department's scholarly acumen in tackling drug-related issues and mitigating violent behaviors both at the individual and societal levels. The workshop saw the participation of 40 officers hailing from diverse sectors including the General Security/Counter-Narcotics Directorate, Legal Department, Erbil Security/Movement Department, Terrorism Department, Economic Department, and Prison Department, alongside representatives from the Peshmerga Ministry/Information Department, Legal Department, and Brigades.

- To address the challenge of substance abuse, the Information and Awareness Department of the 5th Infantry Brigade orchestrated a comprehensive awareness seminar spanning two days, attended by 48 officers, ranks, and Peshmergas. The session delved into the historical context of drug proliferation, its profound socio-psychological ramifications throughout the stages of consumption and addiction, as well as elucidating the attendant side effects and societal repercussions. Moreover, participants were briefed on pertinent legislative frameworks concerning drug regulation and enforcement, alongside the corresponding legal ramifications for both usage and trafficking.
- The National Awareness Division of the 1st Infantry Division, in collaboration with the Awareness Division of the 10th Infantry Brigade, convened a seminar addressing the perils associated with drug abuse and the strategies employed in its mitigation. This event was attended by a cohort of officers and Peshmergas from the brigade headquarters and its three regiments. During the seminar, comprehensive discussions elucidated the inherent dangers of substance abuse, alongside proactive measures aimed at combating its proliferation and fostering prevention initiatives.

Mechanisms of resistance to drugs and psychoactive agents

In accordance with the provisions outlined in Law No. 1 of 2020 currently enacted within the Kurdistan Region, an interdepartmental committee focusing on the mitigation of drug resistance and psychoactive substance dependency has been established within the Ministry of Peshmerga. This committee is presided over by the Chief Justice of the First Military Court and comprises esteemed representatives from the Directorate of Military Intelligence, the Legal Counsel's Office, and the Directorate of General Medical Affairs.

The committee has meticulously crafted a comprehensive dossier addressing the challenge of drug and psychotropic substance proliferation for the Ministry of Peshmerga. Within this report, an exhaustive examination of the root causes, therapeutic interventions, preventive measures, and operational strategies aimed at raising awareness and fostering a multifaceted approach to counter this issue has been outlined. Moreover, concerted efforts will be made to synergize and streamline initiatives aimed at combating and preempting this challenge across the various units within the Ministry of Peshmerga.

Collaboration with global stakeholders in the realm of administration and human capital management:

- The United Nations representative has articulated a commitment to aiding the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs in the process of force restructuring. This commitment entails the deployment of advisors to both the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs and the reform project team, aligning with the United Nations' broader mission to enhance security sector governance.
- To enhance organizational efficiency and human resource management within the Ministry of Peshmerga, a collaborative effort with Brad Leaf American Electronic Engineering Company has been initiated to discuss the implementation of an electronic system project. This initiative aims to streamline correspondence and facilitate mail exchanges through a localized network, thereby enabling a more efficient workflow within the Ministry. Additionally, the project will integrate comprehensive personnel information for all officers and employees of the Peshmerga forces. Anticipated to commence imminently, this endeavor signifies a significant step towards modernizing administrative processes within the Ministry.
- In accordance with Regional Decree No. (128) issued on April 11, 2023, and mindful of the correspondence from the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, specifically Letter No. (1197) dated March 20, 2023, alongside Prime Minister Decree No. (2591) enacted on July 3, 2023, pertaining to the elevation of Officer Rank (373) within the Ministry, it is hereby noted.

Environmental consciousness

A sequence of environmental consciousness workshops has been carried out under the guidance of the Environmental Conservation and Restoration Committee and in collaboration with the National Consciousness Directorate of the General Directorate of Information and National Awareness within the Ministry of Peshmerga. Thirty officers from the 2nd, 10th, and 15th Infantry Brigades took part, engaging in discussions encompassing various facets of environmental preservation. Topics included environmental conservation strategies, biodiversity, sources of environmental degradation, and mitigation methods.

Implementation of the reform legislation concerning the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs

In accordance with the insights and data furnished by the Office of Coordination and Monitoring throughout the reform endeavors within the ninth cabinet, persistent efforts persist in instituting appropriate measures and frameworks in this domain. The Ministry of Peshmerga holds paramount significance, with its reform journey traversing several pivotal phases, the progression of which remains ongoing. A significant segment of these reforms aligns with the execution of recommendations outlined in the regional blueprint. Herein delineated are various mechanisms for the execution of reform recommendations, particularly focusing on augmenting the array of recommendations pertinent to the Ministry of Peshmerga.

First: to foster cohesion within the accounting unit, a consensus was reached during the third session of the High Committee for Monitoring the Implementation of the Reform Law within the Ministry of Peshmerga on December 7, 2020. This agreement pertained to the establishment of a novel framework. This framework, under the auspices of the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs, mirrors the collaborative brigades established under the reform law, in conjunction with coalition forces offering support to the Kurdistan Peshmerga forces. This initiative aims to amalgamate (70) and (80) units, synchronizing (26) existing projects with the coalition and (8) projects delineated within Reform Law No. (2) of 2020.

- The procedure of coordinating and amalgamating the external forces under the purview of the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs underwent significant enhancements prior to 1/7/2020. During this period, the collective brigades augmented from (14) to (19) units, while the personnel strength within the Ministry expanded from (43,347) to (56,575) Peshmergas.
- The commands of Support Forces 1 and 2 have been reassigned to the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs.

Table 7 Statistics of Support Forces

No	Matter	From 1/7/2020	From 1/4/2022
1	Joint Lieutenants	14	19
2	Ministry staff	43,347	60,016
3	Support Forces Command	None	2& 1
4	Peshmergas who receive salaries from banks	5,818	33,800

Secondly, the Financial Oversight Department of the Kurdistan Region, pursuant to the directive (1/1/91) dated 17th May 2021, has issued instructions to all relevant offices to undertake requisite measures for auditing accounting entities akin to the structured units within the Ministry, in collaboration with the Financial Oversight Office of the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs.

Thirdly, in accordance with Decree No. (13/5394) issued on 30/6/2020, the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs has delegated complete jurisdiction to the (Financial Supervision Office), subjecting it to scrutiny by the accounting entities of both the Kurdistan Regional Financial Oversight Bureau and the (Financial Supervision Office).

- Responsibilities of the Ministry of Peshmerga Pertaining to the fourth and fifth sections of Article (4): The Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs, through their ministerial edict No. A/4/1524 dated December 2021, established the requisite personnel allocations for the positions of brigadier, lieutenant, regimental commander, and deputies within the 70th and 80th units.
- A medical disability determination committee has been established within the Ministry of Veterans Affairs with the mandate to meticulously assess and evaluate grievances from disabled veterans who have hitherto been unable to access necessary care owing to their health circumstances. Over the course of its tenure, the panel has diligently scrutinized the cases of 9646 individuals with disabilities. The ensuing findings are detailed below:

- As per the determination of the medical committee, in accordance with the provisions outlined in Law No. (34) of 2007 concerning the entitlements of disabled Peshmergas, a total of 4650 individuals with disabilities have successfully undergone examination and assessment. This figure denotes the percentage allocated to Peshmergas officially recognized as disabled, adhering to established regulations.

The Directorate General of Pensions within the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs collaborates closely with the respective commands of the 70th and 80th units to distinguish between individuals disabled in the line of duty as Peshmerga and those whose disabilities stem from incidental occurrences outside of Peshmerga obligations.

(3417) individuals failed to meet the stipulated quota. Following receipt of their grievances, the Medical Committee of the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs will undertake a reevaluation process to discern those meeting the criteria for eligibility, subsequently forwarding their cases to the High Medical Committee of the Ministry for further consideration.

- A total of 1579 individuals are currently undergoing evaluation in accordance with relevant regulations to determine their eligibility for consideration by a medical board based on their respective disabilities.
- The Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs, through ministerial decree number (11595) dated 24/7/2021, has initiated the initial phase concerning (2424) pensions encompassing military, health, and deceased pensions. Consequently, the pertinent salary and property records have been seamlessly transitioned to the General Directorate of Pensions within the Ministry of Finance and Economy.
- The Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs, pursuant to Order No. (18262) dated 1/12/2021, in its subsequent phase, redirected the cases of (136) additional pension recipients to the General Directorate of Pensions within the Ministry of Finance and Economy.
- According to the contents of this article, the records pertaining to Peshmerga pensioners are slated for direct transference to the General Directorate of Pensions within the Ministry of Finance and Economy. This significant initiative, designated as the inaugural action of the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs by ministerial decree number (A/18/4648) issued on 13/3/2022, has resulted in the transfer of cases concerning (59) pensioners to the Ministry of Finance and Economy.

This article necessitates the revision of Pension Law 27 of 2006, as well as the reassessment of Law No. 18 of 2011 concerning the Salaries and Pensions of the Internal Security Forces and Law No. 38 of 2007 regarding the Salaries and Pensions of the Peshmerga in the Kurdistan Region. Alternatively, it suggests the adjustment of the pension increment within the KRG budget legislation.

Required actions to enact the directives set forth by the Ministry of Peshmerga.

Following a sequence of workshops and deliberations, the Office of the Coordinator for International Advocacy devised specific protocols. These protocols were subsequently communicated by the Office of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers to pertinent stakeholders, inclusive of the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs, with the aim of aligning with international directives within the stipulated timeframe outlined in the plan.

Committed to fostering national unity and harmony

- It is imperative to prioritize efforts towards the execution of Article 140 of the Federal Constitution. This strategic initiative not only fosters harmonious cohabitation but also fosters a sense of national cohesion and stability, particularly within regions delineated by the aforementioned article. Furthermore, addressing lingering challenges in areas of heightened ethnic diversity and minority presence is paramount to fostering an inclusive and cohesive society.

Regarding the rescue of kidnapped Yazidis:

- Collaborate with the Evidence Collection Committee, the Office for the Rescue of Abducted Yazidis, and pertinent stakeholders to devise a comprehensive action plan aimed at rescuing Yazidis and individuals whose whereabouts remain undisclosed.
- Intensify cooperation between the Ministry of Peshmerga and the Commission of Inquiry in gathering evidence, while concurrently enhancing collaboration with the Office for the Rescue of Abducted Yazidis to facilitate the safe recovery of the abductees.

Regarding compensation matters:

- Activate the Committee for Compensation of Victims of War and Military Incidents.

Committed to facilitating training courses and programs

Facilitating additional workshops and training sessions aimed at equipping the Peshmerga forces, with no fewer than (10) sessions annually, due to the relatively limited presence of international trainers within the Ministry in comparison to its personnel capacity.

Ministry of the Interior

Out of the (68) recommendations submitted to the Ministry of Interior in 2022, (31) recommendations have been implemented, (17) recommendations have not been implemented and (20) recommendations were in the process of implementation. Compared to 2023, the number of implemented recommendations has increased to (48) recommendations, there are no remaining unfulfilled recommendations, and (20) recommendations are under implementation. In this regard the implementation rate becomes (85.3%)

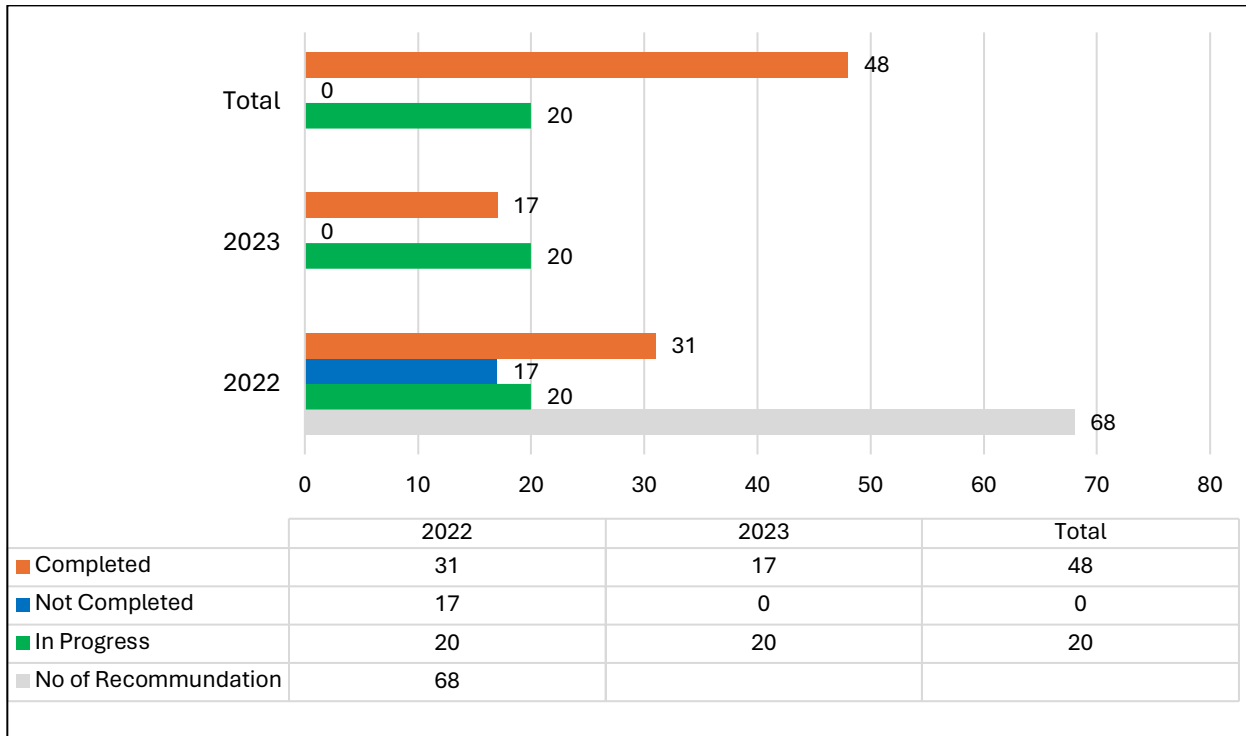


Figure 11: Implementation of Recommendations Related to the Ministry of Interior

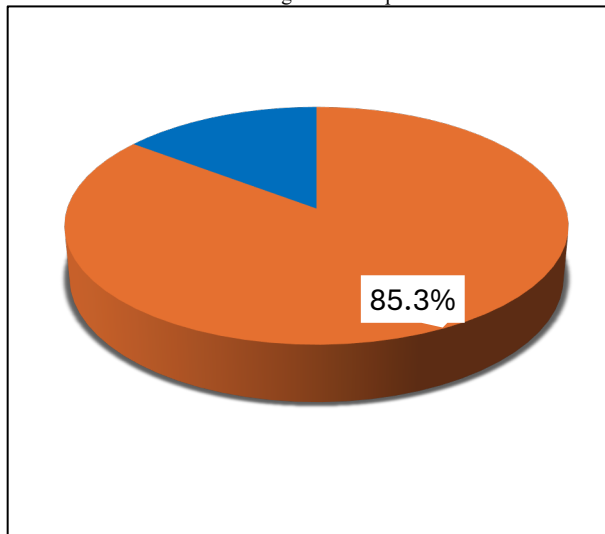


Figure-12 Rates of recommendation execution for 2022-2023

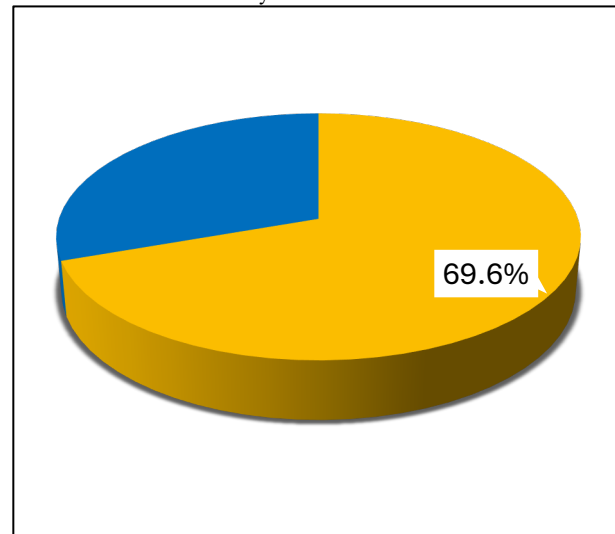


Figure-13 Effort rate of the ministry to completed the recommendations

Implemented Recommendations

1. Enabling the consideration and justification of both the adoption and non-adoption of protester demands.
2. Advocating for the comprehensive registration of children with disabilities to safeguard against citizenship deprivation.
3. Instituting requisite actions to uphold impartial treatment of all refugees and internally displaced individuals, ensuring equitable legal protection.
4. Safeguarding the welfare of refugees and internally displaced persons by furnishing essential amenities such as electricity, water, healthcare, vital sustenance, and ancillary services through collaborative efforts with the United Nations, refugee agencies, humanitarian organizations, and related entities.
5. Enforce legislation pertaining to political parties with a focus on fostering a conducive environment for political engagement.
6. Enhance training initiatives for law enforcement personnel regarding gender-specific dimensions of law enforcement, particularly addressing issues concerning violence against women, to enable a proficient response to such incidents while prioritizing the well-being of the victims.
7. Foster media campaigns aimed at raising awareness about the intolerability of violence against women and its detrimental societal impacts, and advocate for increased reporting of such offenses, particularly by facilitating access to reporting mechanisms and ensuring victim protection.
8. Furnish comprehensive insights into the mandate and jurisdiction of the Women's Empowerment Directorate, delineating its collaborative frameworks with pertinent ministries and women's advocacy organizations, alongside detailing the governmental budgetary allocations in terms of human capital, technological infrastructure, and financial resources dedicated to this directorate's operations.
9. Expedite the legal proceedings against individuals affiliated with ISIL for perpetrating crimes against humanity by meticulously gathering evidence and electronic documentation, adhering strictly to the tenets of international humanitarian law and human rights conventions.
10. Safeguard the welfare of families associated with ISIS who have abstained from involvement in terrorist activities.
11. Heighten endeavors aimed at eradicating discrimination against women and girls with disabilities, particularly within refugee populations and rural communities.
12. Ensure the deployment of security forces trained to handle gatherings proficiently, while holding them accountable for any disproportionate use of force against demonstrators.
13. Uphold and honor the principles of freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, while ensuring accountability for any transgressions involving excessive force or deployment of lethal weaponry against demonstrators.
14. Safeguarding the right to peaceful assembly.

15. Mitigating instances of statelessness and ensuring adherence to laws and regulations governing citizenship acquisition.
16. Facilitating access to legal services, including civil documentation, for all citizens.
17. Provision of identity cards to ethnic and religious communities as well as internally displaced persons.
18. Recognizing the imperative of registering all children with disabilities, ensuring their rightful citizenship status, and dedicating requisite human, technological, and financial resources to sustained registration efforts.
19. Advocating for and supporting the Central Committee for Combating Human Trafficking.
20. Intensifying efforts to combat trafficking in women and girls through expedited and impartial investigations, with stringent penalties for perpetrators of such crimes.
21. Ensure the attainment of justice for victims of human trafficking while concurrently securing their requisite support and protection.
22. Undertake appropriate legal recourse against law enforcement and security personnel upon substantiated evidence of their involvement in the torture or mistreatment of detainees.
23. Conduct expeditious and unbiased inquiries into all allegations of torture and other instances of maltreatment, including cases of enforced disappearance.
24. Guarantee the supervised custody of detainees, facilitating their communication with family members and legal representatives, with due notification of their status and detention locale to the latter.
25. Foster bilateral and/or multilateral cooperation in judicial affairs, employing measures such as bilateral accords on prisoner extradition, while meticulously considering the equilibrium between transnational crime eradication and humanitarian imperatives.
26. Safeguard cultural heritage sites and halt the wanton destruction of monuments of significant cultural value.
27. Intensify endeavors aimed at the protection of cultural landmarks.
28. Uphold gender parity throughout the recruitment process and in the allocation of ministerial roles and high-ranking political appointments.
29. Diligently probe all allegations of torture and other forms of cruel, inhumane, or degrading treatment or punishment perpetrated against children to ensure accountability and deterrence.
30. Institute oversight mechanisms to forestall instances of torture and other forms of inhumane or degrading treatment in all settings where individuals with disabilities are deprived of their liberty, encompassing mental health facilities, correctional institutions, nursing homes, rehabilitation centers, and care facilities.
31. Persist in endeavors to guarantee safeguarding and humanitarian aid to internally displaced persons (IDPs), particularly focusing on the welfare of women and children, within the confines of established international human rights and humanitarian statutes.
32. Heighten endeavors to eradicate systemic biases encountered by women with disabilities hailing from diverse ethnic, religious, or linguistic backgrounds on a multilateral level.

33. Establish accommodations to effectively address the predicaments of survivors in need of refuge.
34. Extend support to women and girls who have fallen victim to violence, those liberated or rescued from enslavement or abduction, and streamline protocols pertaining to their access to legal and humanitarian provisions, ensuring a simplified process for survivors.
35. Implement efficacious measures, with genuine engagement of organizations representing women and girls with disabilities, to integrate disability inclusivity comprehensively into all gender-related policies and legislation, including the Domestic Violence Protection Bill, and infuse gender mainstreaming across frameworks concerning disability issues.
36. Promote awareness regarding the fundamental right of unhindered access to information from authoritative sources and propagate its dissemination in alignment with pertinent international norms.
37. Undertake requisite measures to ameliorate the integration process of Karaj individuals into society, alongside resolute efforts to combat the poverty they encounter, guaranteeing their access to employment, care, and healthcare, guided by the principles outlined in General Recommendation No. 27 concerning discrimination against Karaj communities. Practical measures should be implemented to effectively counteract discrimination and marginalization within the Member State, encompassing provisions for education and housing. The Committee urges the issuance of standardized official documentation to all Karaj individuals without prejudice.
38. Bolster the capacities of organizations and administrations in combating cyber-terrorism through the establishment of a preemptive security apparatus.
39. Foster collaboration and coherence with pertinent international bodies to address the scourge of cyber-terrorism comprehensively, undertaking the analysis and monitoring of global developments in this sphere.
40. Enact and enforce the Refugee Bill to establish a robust legal framework ensuring the protection of refugees and asylum seekers, in alignment with universally acknowledged principles.
41. It is advisable to consider the adoption of a national strategy aimed at ensuring protection against torture, coupled with the enforcement of appropriate punitive measures against perpetrators. It is imperative to underscore that no exceptional circumstances should be invoked to justify acts of torture. Safeguarding against torture represents an inalienable right, as enshrined in Article (4), paragraph (2) of the Figure er. Furthermore, the Committee recommends the intensification of training initiatives for law enforcement personnel, focusing on legal frameworks proscribing torture and adhering to international standards in this domain, alongside regulations pertaining to detention conditions.
42. Provision of support to women and children's survivors can be facilitated through the establishment of a dedicated program aimed at their reintegration into society post-trauma.
43. Efforts to eliminate violence against children and address the underlying causes of their vulnerability to exploitation for prostitution or trafficking should be pursued vigorously, while concurrently upholding existing regulatory frameworks in this regard.

44. Strengthening collaboration with international and regional organizations specializing in the expeditious resolution of issues concerning internally displaced persons (IDPs) is encouraged. Moreover, soliciting assistance from civil society stakeholders to provide financial and logistical support for the reconstruction of areas liberated from armed terrorist factions will facilitate the voluntary repatriation of IDPs to their original locales.
45. Systematic collection of comprehensive data, including statistics and categorized information, pertaining to domestic and cross-border trafficking activities, the incidence of criminal prosecutions initiated, and judicial outcomes against perpetrators of trafficking offenses is paramount.
46. Methodical gathering of data encompassing all manifestations of sexual violence against women, stratified according to demographic variables such as age, geographical region, disability status, and the nature of the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator, is recommended.
47. Implementation of capacity-building initiatives targeting various stakeholders within the public sector and appointees in employment sectors is warranted, with a focus on promoting an understanding of the non-discriminatory essence of specialized procedures and their pivotal role in advancing gender equality objectives.
48. Sustained efforts to enhance the education and training of law enforcement personnel on human rights standards and pertinent international humanitarian laws germane to their professional domains, encompassing both military and security spheres, should be prioritized.

Recommendations currently underway for implementation:

1. Foster a climate of inclusivity and equality through expanded governmental initiatives, in tandem with targeted civil society entities.
2. Enact legislation addressing domestic violence, eliminating any allowances for invoking honor as a legal pretext for violence against women.
3. Safeguard the rights of women who come forward to report instances of domestic violence.
4. Employ proactive measures with substantive involvement of advocacy groups representing women and girls with disabilities, integrating disability considerations into all gender-related policies and legislation, including the Domestic Violence Protection Bill, and vice versa, ensuring gender perspectives are embedded in disability-related policies and laws.
5. Disseminate information regarding the Domestic Violence Protection Bill throughout communities.
6. Heighten endeavors to safeguard journalists, media professionals, and advocates of human rights.
7. Take proactive steps to investigate infractions against human rights activists and ensure accountability for those responsible.

8. Expand the network of specialized facilities providing shelter, as well as mental and physical rehabilitation services for victims, facilitating their reintegration into society, in collaboration with international organizations and specialized civil society groups.
9. Preserve the unique religious, cultural, and material heritage of the Yazidi community.
10. Guarantee the effective execution of the National Strategy for the Eradication of Violence against Women.
11. Embrace a nationwide policy aimed at empowering rural women and enhancing their economic and social standing.
12. Ensure the inclusion of women, children, and individuals with disabilities in the development of legislation and initiatives addressing environmental shifts and mitigating the impacts of environmental calamities.
13. Formulate a proactive strategy to mitigate the risk of discrimination, social stigma, and marginalization experienced by women and children among internally displaced persons (IDPs) associated with ISIS, survivors, returnees, and displaced individuals, facilitating their seamless reintegration into society.
14. Implement a comprehensive strategy to dismantle discriminatory stereotypes and detrimental customs, including practices like child marriage and temporary unions.
15. Align with the principles outlined in the Beijing Declaration and Agenda to advance authentic gender equality.
16. Develop an integrated policy for the rehabilitation of women and girls who have endured forced marriages to ISIS combatants, as well as those who have suffered enslavement, abuse, or other forms of sexual and physical violence, ensuring access to medical, psychological, and social support within the community, while establishing shelters or centers for individuals seeking refuge, adequately resourced to meet their needs.
17. Strengthen existing national mechanisms aimed at preventing domestic violence and safeguarding all victims.
18. Persist in the rigorous enforcement of legislation against female genital mutilation, progressively curbing the prevalence of this practice until its complete eradication.
19. Enhance endeavors to prevent and eradicate all forms of discrimination and violence against women, fully adhering to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence against Women, and implementing additional measures to combat harmful traditions, including the elimination of female genital mutilation, and early and forced marriages.
20. Redouble efforts to address intersecting forms of discrimination faced by women and girls with disabilities, implementing targeted interventions, particularly in rural areas, among displaced or refugee populations, immigrants, and individuals belonging to various ethnic or religious groups.

The following encompasses the measures, laws, guidelines, procedures, and practical steps in aligning with the international recommendations.

Membership in international treaties and agreements

Engagement in international treaties falls within the purview of the Iraqi constitution, a matter subject to sovereign prerogative. This undertaking is conducted within the scope of federal jurisdiction through adherence to the UN Convention on the Elimination of Transnational Organized Crime. Noteworthy outcomes have emerged from these deliberations, yielding recommendations and prompting the enactment of several initiatives, notably in the realm of enforcing the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act.

Enhancing Measures and Mechanisms in the Combat Against Organized Crimes

- The Directorate for Combating Organized Crime stands as an integral member of the Central Committee of the Federal Government, underscoring its vital role in safeguarding societal integrity. Presently, it operates from eight strategically positioned offices located in Erbil, Duhok, Halabja, Sulaimani, Garmian, Raperin, Soran, and Zakho, each serving as a bastion of vigilance against illicit activities.
- In its pursuit of maintaining a comprehensive understanding of the evolving landscape of organized crime, the Directorate diligently gathers and analyzes data and statistics from its offices every four months. This systematic approach enables a nuanced comprehension of the regions falling within the purview of Law No. (28) on Combating Organized Crime enacted in 2012.
- Moreover, the Directorate, in collaboration with the Institute for Security, Administration, and Information Technology Development, has orchestrated several specialized training courses in conjunction with esteemed international entities. These endeavors, fostering interdisciplinary cooperation, engage personnel from various government entities and external authorities, transcending boundaries in fortifying our collective resolve against criminal elements.
- Furthermore, strategic alliances with reputable non-governmental organizations, exemplified by the collaboration with Al-Masir in Baghdad, underscore our commitment to providing holistic support to victims of human trafficking. Such partnerships reinforce the ethical imperative of safeguarding human dignity amidst the challenges posed by organized crime.
- Noteworthy is our active participation in the annual conferences convened by the United Nations Program on the Elimination of Crime (UNODS) in Austria, in both 2021 and 2022. These gatherings serve as pivotal platforms for knowledge exchange and policy deliberations, bolstering our global efforts in combating crime through informed discourse and collaborative action.
- Dedicated helplines have been established for departmental offices, fostering streamlined communication channels with both domestic and international collaborative entities.
- A collaborative agreement in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been forged between the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Syed Foundation International. This

partnership aims to provide sanctuary for victims within the auspices of the Steps shelter operated by the aforementioned organization.

- The Directorate for Combating Organized Crime meticulously compiles data and statistics pertaining to human trafficking offenses. However, such information remains confidential to safeguard the integrity of ongoing cases and ensure the protection of victims.
- Within the Ministry of Interior, a specialized social police directorate operates under the purview of the General Directorate of the Kurdistan Regional Police. This directorate collaborates with autonomous administrations and district-level departments to preemptively address instances of violence through community outreach initiatives and preventive measures against domestic violence.
- Robust collaboration persists between the Ministry of Interior and various international and non-governmental organizations, including but not limited to IOM, UNODC, HARTLAND, SEED, and Al-Masir.
- Close cooperation with UNODC encompasses counseling services, the facilitation of advanced training courses, and targeted workshops geared toward combatting organized crime.
- Comprehensive training courses have been conducted for personnel involved in residency matters, spanning a duration of five months and involving the participation of approximately 40 staff members. These initiatives are geared towards enhancing skills and proficiency in combating human trafficking.
- Foreign laborers are subject to rigorous monitoring, with periodic follow-ups conducted every 40 days. Their status is diligently assessed within a 30-day timeframe, ensuring timely resolution of their circumstances.

Statistics of fighting organized crime in the region:

- (172) companies have been blacklisted.
- (93) companies suspended for inactivity.
- (157) companies were closed down on the basis of court orders.
- (998) companies under supervision.
- (534) companies are under judicial investigation.

Combating Torture and Enforced Disappearances

In alignment with international guidelines, the implementation of a comprehensive strategy by the Kurdistan Regional Government to address instances of torture represents a pivotal step forward.

With respect to the pursuit of legal recourse against perpetrators of torture, upon receipt of a complaint from either the aggrieved party or a detainee, a specialized investigative body shall be convened. Should substantiated evidence, as delineated in medical assessments, indicate the occurrence of torture, swift and decisive legal measures shall be undertaken against the

responsible party. Notably, on March 1, 2023, the Kurdistan Parliament initiated the inaugural reading of a legislative proposal aimed at combating instances of torture and ill-treatment, signaling a concerted commitment to upholding human rights within the region.

Elimination of violence against women and discrimination

Within the establishments dedicated to addressing violence against women and families overseen by the Ministry of Interior, inclusivity is prioritized. Members of various communities, including (Turkmen and Christians) are not only shielded from discrimination but are also afforded opportunities for advancement, ascending to roles ranging from staff members to departmental directors.

Achieving equality between men and women

The Ministry of Interior has published a book on the policy of equality between women and men in duties and rights, this book has been circulated by the Presidency of the Council of Ministers to all ministries for follow-up. The proportion of women in all departments of the ministry is considered. The law against domestic violence No. 8 of 2011 is in force in the Kurdistan Region.

Efforts are presently in progress to revise the legislation to align it more closely with the strategic objectives, agenda, and global obligations of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). Following extensive consultations with the General Directorate for Combating Violence against Women and Family, deficiencies within the existing legal framework have been discerned. Consequently, a proposed bill has been tendered to the Kurdistan Parliament for deliberation and consideration of its proposed revisions.

With reference to Articles 380 and 398 of the Iraqi Penal Code No. 111 of 1969, pertaining to infringements upon women's rights, the General Directorate for Combating Violence against Women and Family is actively engaged in efforts to revise these articles with the aim of eradicating such transgressions. Both provisions underscore the safeguarding of women's rights and endeavor to align with the societal landscape.

Allocate hotlines and mobile response units for the reporting of instances of violence.

Within the Directorate for Combating Violence against Women, two specialized divisions operate the Helpline and the Mobile Intervention Team. Their primary objective is to deliver immediate support to victims of violence and sexual assault. Adhering strictly to legal protocols, the Directorate cannot intervene in any reported cases, including instances of violence, without the issuance of a judicial directive.

To ensure expeditious resolution of cases, it is imperative to institute a protocol whereby teams are dispatched promptly for investigation in instances where the affected party, whether a woman or victim, is unable to establish contact.

Provide legal and humanitarian services to Yazidi survivors

From 2018 to 2022, multiple initiatives and educational programs were executed in collaboration with the German organization (GIZ) to bolster the psychological, social, and legal welfare of Yazidi families affected by displacement. These endeavors aimed to furnish essential consultations for survivors and extend support to victims residing in camps such as (Birsf, Bajid Kendal, and Kabrto). Furthermore, legal counsel will be extended by the High Committee for the Recognition of ISIS Crimes as Genocide.

The involvement of individuals with disabilities in the development of all policies and legislation pertaining to gender matters is characterized by inclusivity and non-discrimination across diverse communities and socio-economic strata. The Iraqi constitutional framework, penal statutes, and personal status legislation are underscored by principles of impartiality and equality, a stance also reflected in the current iteration of the anti-violence legislation under consideration.

The process of integrating Karaj into society

The initiative to integrate Gipsy (commonly referred to as "Karajs") into mainstream society has been a focus of attention by the Ministry of Interior within the Kurdistan Region. In a significant development, Ministerial Decree No. 11746, dated 12/6/2014, authorized the establishment of the (Karaj Cultural Center) in the province of Erbil. Addressing the multifaceted challenges associated with poverty necessitates a concerted effort, encompassing the formulation of a comprehensive strategy. It is imperative to engage civil society organizations in this endeavor, fostering collaboration and synergy to effect tangible change.

In Duhok, a bespoke residential enclave, named the (Rizgari Community) has been established for Karaj residents. The Kurdistan Regional Government has proactively initiated the construction of 264 residences for their accommodation. Historically, the Karaj populace, exceeding 30,000 individuals, encountered challenges in acquiring requisite documentation. However, under the auspices of the ninth cabinet, the Kurdistan Regional Government has implemented streamlined procedures, facilitating the issuance of identity cards to the community. Moreover, an environment of inclusivity prevails, ensuring equitable access to employment opportunities devoid of any discriminatory practices.

The right to assemble and demonstrate

In accordance with the organizational framework of the departments and autonomous administrations within the Ministry of Interior, the police department under the auspices of civil affairs governance has been established to oversee gatherings and demonstrations. However, it is emphasized that they are prohibited from employing disproportionate force when addressing demonstrators. These specialized units undergo regular training to enhance their proficiency in executing their responsibilities. It is incumbent upon the civil affairs unit to safeguard any lawful and peaceful assembly following official requests, subsequent to acquiring comprehensive information regarding the timing, location, objective, and itinerary of the assembly.

All internal security personnel are directed to safeguard journalists, members of the media, and advocates of human rights. Under no circumstances should law enforcement officials engaged in civil crowd control resort to the use of deadly force against demonstrators.

Upon receiving notification of a grievance pertaining to misconduct against human rights advocates, due legal processes are diligently initiated, entailing the apprehension and subsequent referral of the accused to judicial authorities. The Ministry of Interior institutes educational initiatives encompassing guidance and cultural programs tailored for officers and staff, fostering a perpetual cognizance of legal precepts among law enforcement personnel. These programs aim to imbue them with a scholarly, contemporary approach, instilling proficiency in the tenets of human rights, democracy, and civil society, along with adept strategies for engaging with diverse segments of the populace, all aligned with globally recognized standards of training.

The enactment of the Law on Facilitating Public Demonstrations No. 11 of 2010 signifies a commendable stride towards safeguarding the lawful entitlements of the populace.

When tendering an application for authorization, in the event of non-receipt of a response within 48 hours, it shall be construed as tacit approval for the organization of the demonstration. The Committee overseeing Demonstrations retains the right to contest any decision of denial before the Court of Appeal within a period of three days following notification of such denial. Any appeals shall be adjudicated within a 48-day timeframe, with the resulting decision being conclusive. In the year 2015, Erbil province witnessed the hosting of 105 sanctioned demonstrations, alongside 120 unsanctioned gatherings, while 32 applications for demonstrations were declined.

Access to information from authoritative sources

The enactment of the Kurdistan Regional Government's Right to Information Law No. 11 of 2013 stands as a notable accomplishment, being esteemed as among the foremost statutes in the Middle Eastern region. Deliberating on the law within the parameters of the KRG's human rights agenda marks a significant stride forward.

All occurrences and advancements will be communicated to the public and media channels under the purview of the Director of Media and Communications within the provincial police directorates and administrations. The Ministry of Interior will furnish requisite clarifications to the citizenry, and our department's authorized representatives will disseminate pertinent data and information via press briefings, with a particular focus on matters concerning domestic violence and traffic metrics.

From a security perspective, divulging information regarding security and military assets is strictly prohibited, particularly with regard to numerical figures and geographical coordinates. The Independent Human Rights Commission crafted a preliminary protocol on September 21, 2014, subsequently presenting it to both the Council of Ministers and the Council of Shora during the years 2016 and 2017. Conversely, insufficient funding stands as a significant hurdle within this domain. The Ministry of Interior has designated an individual tasked with disseminating information through official communication, complemented by numerous educational sessions tailored for this specific objective. In adherence to the Access to Information Act, there have been no grievances lodged against the Ministry of Interior.

Addressing the issue of cyberterrorism

Appropriate legal actions will be pursued to safeguard the rights of individuals impacted by cybercrime, and those responsible will be held accountable in accordance with the provisions outlined in Counter-Terrorism Law No. (6) of 2008 and Iraqi Penal Code No. 111 of 1969, as revised.

Safeguarding the rights of refugees and immigrants

In collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), a preliminary version of the National Strategy for Migration in Iraq and the Kurdistan Region has been formulated to uphold the rights of refugees and migrants. Six ministries from both the Kurdistan Regional Government and the Federal Government, encompassing the Ministry of Interior, are actively engaged in crafting this strategy under the aegis of the Joint Crisis Coordination Center. Areas of focus include human development, labor transportation, labor market oversight, the ramifications of climate change in Iraq, and migration-related concerns.

A collaborative committee has been established to craft a directive for refugees and asylum seekers. The draft directive is presently in its concluding phase and has been meticulously developed with due consideration of pertinent statutes, directives, and global standards.

The Protection of Refugees and Asylum Seekers Bill

Since the beginning of the arrival of refugees in the Kurdistan Region, the Kurdistan Regional Government has put all available resources at the service of refugees because there are no laws and guidelines on humanitarian refugees in Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government.

The Kurdistan Regional Government extends a comprehensive array of services to (IDPs) without charge, encompassing accommodation, essential amenities, educational opportunities, employment support, and transportation facilitation. In collaborative efforts with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Ministry of Interior has established a committee tasked with formulating a set of guidelines tailored to the needs of refugees. This directive, once ratified, will serve to formalize the responsibilities and entitlements of refugees within a legal framework, encompassing their rights, housing provisions, and access to essential services.

Deliver aid to refugees and facilitate their repatriation.

Approximately 80% of the aid rendered to refugees stems from the fiscal allocation of the Kurdistan Regional Government. Furthermore, various organizations have persistently extended support in the following capacities:

In 2014, more than four hundred and sixty thousand (460,000) Yazidis were displaced from the Kurdistan Region. By 2016, approximately one hundred thousand (100,000) individuals had emigrated abroad. Presently, the tally of those who have resettled abroad has surged to one hundred and sixty thousand (160,000) individuals. Collectively, the Yazidi migration stands at two hundred thousand (200,000) persons, representing roughly half, or 50%, of the Yazidi population. This trend poses a significant concern for the demographic composition of their native regions.

In reference to the fiscal allocations for educators and staff members serving Syrian refugees, it is noteworthy that previous disbursements were facilitated by pertinent entities. However, commencing from the academic year of 2019-2020, these forms of aid have undergone adjustments. Presently, the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) has assumed responsibility for this endeavor and has diligently administered all financial benefits due to educators and staff members serving Syrian (Rojava) refugees in recent times.

In the various provinces and autonomous administrations, a specialized law enforcement agency known as the (Refugee Affairs Police) has been established with the aim of safeguarding their interests in collaboration with security apparatus and governmental, as well as non-governmental organizations.

The Chairman of the General Board of Kurdish Regions Outside the Kurdistan Regional Government serves as a distinguished participant within the Technical Committee overseeing negotiations pertaining to the Sinjar Agreement. This pivotal accord brokered between the Iraqi Government and the Kurdistan Regional Government under the auspices of UNAMI on October 1, 2020, stands as a cornerstone endeavor aimed at reinstating stability and fostering normalization in the region of Sinjar. Central to its objectives are the repatriation of displaced individuals to their native lands, the establishment of a coherent administrative framework, and the reinvigoration of legitimate institutions within the area.

Compensation for Survivors of Yazidi Origin

Women of Yazidi descent who have endured the atrocities perpetrated by ISIS extremists, whether within the Kurdistan Region, elsewhere in Iraq, or abroad, shall be duly enrolled in accordance with the pertinent legislation recently ratified by the Iraqi parliament, denoted as the (Yazidi Survivors Law) No. 8 of 2021. The process of enrollment commenced in early August 2022 and shall be administered through an office established by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Kurdistan Regional Government, situated in Duhok.

Latest statistics of refugees in the Kurdistan Region as of December 2023

The most recent data pertaining to the refugee population in the Kurdistan Region, as of December, reveals a total of 900,467 individuals. This figure encompasses 631,174 internally displaced persons alongside 251,475 Syrian refugees, 7,796 Turkish refugees, 8,357 Iranian refugees, and additional groups. Among these are 652 Palestinian refugees and 10,013 individuals classified as various refugees.

The majority of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees within the region are integrated within the host community, (30%) or in camps, which number (33) camps. Approximately 70% of individuals displaced reside outside these camps. Distribution statistics reveal that 41% of IDPs are situated in Erbil province, 40% in Duhok province, and 19% in Sulaimani province.

In November and December of 2023, an approximate total of 3,389 newly-arrived individuals seeking refuge were formally registered within the Kurdistan Region.

Efforts to recognize the case of the Yazidis as genocide

Internationally, the Kurdistan Regional Government persistently endeavors to classify the atrocities and transgressions committed by ISIS as genocide against various communities. To this end, it has instituted a distinguished committee tasked with orchestrating collaboration with global entities and frameworks at governmental, parliamentary, and International Criminal Court tiers in The Hague. Notably, following the installment of the Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Regional Government in the ninth cabinet, governmental and security apparatuses have been tasked with furnishing pertinent data to the United Nations investigative team, aimed at scrutinizing ISIS crimes under the auspices of UNITAD.

Thus far, over 10 countries have acknowledged the tragic massacre inflicted upon the Yazidis as constituting genocide. On the 6th of July, 2021, the Dutch parliament formally recognized the genocide perpetrated against the Yazidis, a decision subsequently ratified by the Dutch government. Similarly, on the 19th of January, 2023, the German government affirmed the designation of the Yazidi ordeal as genocide. In August of 2023, the British government made the determination to recognize the plight of the Yazidis as genocide.

Assisting Women and Children survivors of ISIS

In response to the plight of Yazidi citizens and communities abducted by ISIL extremists, including 6,417 individuals, predominantly women, and children, significant efforts have been undertaken to address this humanitarian crisis. As of the most recent update on May 15, 2023, 3,562 individuals, comprising 1,215 women and 339 men, have been successfully rescued, while 2,693 individuals remain unaccounted for. The Joint Crisis Coordination Center, working in concert with international agencies, organizations, and the Iraqi Ministry of Migration and Refugees, is actively engaged in providing comprehensive support to survivors. This assistance encompasses a range of services aimed at addressing their immediate and long-term needs, including:

- Initiation of multiple programs aimed at providing psychological assistance to female survivors.
- The Joint Crisis Coordination Center of the Ministry of Interior, in collaboration with the Iraqi Ministry of Immigration and Refugees, successfully disbursed a sum of (2,000,000) two million dinars to (899) women survivors as compensation. Efforts are ongoing to ensure equitable compensation for all survivors.
- Establishment of the Institute of Psychotherapy and Trauma at Duhok University. To date, (68) students have completed their studies and received certifications. They are currently engaged in offering psycho-social support within the refugee camps.
- In 2015, an agreement between the Kurdistan Regional Government and the German government was ratified, focusing on the provision of care for survivors. Subsequently, (1088) Yazidi youths have been referred to Germany for specialized psychological treatment.

Overseeing rehabilitation initiatives and providing services

All individuals taken into custody shall be apprehended, transferred, and detained pursuant to judicial rulings in accordance with legal statutes, and shall be accorded full entitlements including legal representation, communication privileges, and notification of kinship ties. Additionally, they shall be duly briefed on their responsibilities and entitlements, including accommodations, hygiene facilities, climate control provisions, nutritious sustenance, and hydration. Comprehensive health monitoring protocols are implemented, with specialized medical units stationed across detention and transit facilities tasked with examining detainees for medical intervention, with particular emphasis on catering to those with disabilities.

Special accommodations are designated for female detainees, with careful consideration given to age categorization. Juvenile police stations cater specifically to those under the age of eighteen, aligning with international norms to ensure a tranquil atmosphere conducive to their well-being and upholding their rights. These rights encompass the grounds of arrest, the entitlement to visitation, communication with relatives via telephone, correspondence through letters, as well as access to reading materials such as magazines, newspapers, books, and electronic media including television and radio.

Enhancing Law Enforcement's Understanding of Human Rights Standards through Training

Conduct training sessions for law enforcement personnel regarding human rights protocols. Initiate ongoing educational programs for officers and staff aimed at fostering awareness and adherence to human rights standards within law enforcement. Police forces will be steadfast in their commitment to endorse and facilitate the integration of these protocols.

Prevention of Violence Against Minors

Minors subjected to abuse are directed to anti-violence bureaus and divisions. However, in instances where a minor is implicated, their cases are forwarded to juvenile law enforcement agencies. This process entails collaborative efforts among various entities including anti-violence departments, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, juvenile law enforcement authorities, and law enforcement units dedicated to ongoing public awareness initiatives, educational programs, and training sessions conducted in public areas and tourist hubs, particularly addressing issues of prostitution and trafficking.

Facilitating citizenship acquisition and upholding egalitarian principles

In light of the proposed revision to Citizenship Law No. (26) of 2006 aimed at fostering parity between genders in citizenship acquisition, transfer, safeguarding, and modification, as per recommendations directed towards Iraq, encompassing the Kurdistan Region, the Ministry of Interior collaborates with the federal administration to eradicate any gender-based discrimination in citizenship procurement.

As per the provisions outlined in Article 3/A of the legal statute, in cases where a child seeks Iraqi citizenship through paternal lineage, the registration process shall be facilitated seamlessly through civil registry channels, irrespective of the nationality of the mother, thus ensuring a smooth procedure devoid of complications. Conversely, challenges may arise for individuals born to an Iraqi mother and a foreign father who pursue citizenship based on maternal heritage, potentially leading to a complex and cumbersome journey through bureaucratic channels.

In this context, the protocols are characterized by their meticulous administrative rigor and requisite time commitments. Simultaneously, it is incumbent upon the child and mother to visit the General Directorate of Citizenship to secure registration approval, reflecting operational norms. Subsequently, each successive child born must navigate identical procedural pathways as the initial child. To this end, adherence to stringent guidelines is imperative, ensuring equitable treatment devoid of gender bias following thorough authentication of the maternal role, concomitant with paternal engagement with the children.

Necessary measures to implement the recommendations of the Ministry of Interior

Following an array of workshops and roundtable discussions, the Office of the Coordinator for International Advocacy formulated specific measures. These measures, under the auspices of the Office of the Prime Minister, have been communicated to pertinent stakeholders, including the Ministry of Interior. They are poised to be enacted in alignment with international recommendations, within the designated timeframe integral to the overarching plan.

Regarding the issue of human trafficking

- Formulating and disseminating a National Action Plan along with specific guidelines aimed at effectively addressing the scourge of human trafficking.
- Revisiting Directive No. (3) of 2018, particularly regarding the delineation of responsibilities, to ensure its alignment with current challenges and best practices.
- Expanding the establishment of research facilities across key provinces, notably in Erbil, Sulaymaniyah, and Duhok, as the existing six offices inadequately cater to the needs of the Kurdistan Region.
- Ensuring a cohesive and standardized approach across all anti-trafficking offices, thereby fostering consistency in case management procedures.
- Implementing stringent criteria for the selection of personnel involved in combating organized crime, based on requisite technical competencies, skills, and experience.
- Addressing the critical need for interpreters within these offices, given that a significant proportion of trafficking victims are of foreign origin, thus facilitating effective communication and support.
- Ensuring effective operation of the central committee and its sub-committees, harmonizing their operational protocols, and facilitating the provision of necessary resources to facilitate their functions adequately.

- Including the Supreme Judicial Council within the membership framework of the Supreme Committee tasked with combating human trafficking.
- It is advisable for the Ministry of Justice representative within the High Committee Against Trafficking in Persons to be a member of the prosecutorial body rather than an administrative staff member.
- Implementing specialized training programs for pertinent personnel within the Directorate of Combating Organized Crime and its affiliated branches.
- Implementing regular oversight measures on agencies specialized in labor migration from the Kurdistan Region to prevent illicit activities, including diversion to unauthorized destinations within Iraq or neighboring countries.
- Fostering coordination among the Ministry of Interior and pertinent stakeholders concerning human trafficking cases, particularly regarding the local reporting mechanism within the Kurdistan Region, and facilitating liaison officers' interaction with the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol).
- Develop and establish a comprehensive curriculum focused on combating human trafficking, alongside implementing advocacy initiatives at the police academy level to disseminate this program among law enforcement personnel.
- Deliver training sessions and capacity-building programs for staff members, particularly those directly involved in trafficking cases, to enhance their comprehension and application of legal frameworks in criminal investigations.
- Proscribe the practice of begging, recognizing it as a manifestation of human trafficking and a potential avenue for exploitation.
- In instances where beggars are apprehended, particularly when minors are involved and cannot be subject to prosecution, prioritize their placement in specialized shelters until the resolution of their guardians' legal status.
- Establish a dedicated hotline to facilitate communication and reporting pertaining to instances of human trafficking.

Committed to the eradication of torture and ill-treatment

- Without exception, detainees shall not be subjected to any form of inhumane, cruel, physical, or mental torture by representatives of the relevant authority.
- Direct each implicated party engaged in investigations to establish appropriate protocols for documenting detainees' statements by investigating officials, ensuring the veracity of allegations regarding torture, and preserving any related evidence. Should detainees dispute the authenticity or integrity of their statements, measures should be in place to address such concerns.
- Encourage all stakeholders in criminal investigations to advance technological capabilities for both investigation and safeguarding criminal information and evidence.

- Facilitate legal representation, and implement a mechanism in collaboration with the Kurdistan Bar Association to guarantee detainees' access to legal counsel from the outset of their interactions with authorities, including during arrest and interrogation proceedings.
- Law enforcement personnel should endeavor to articulate the rationale behind an individual's detainment directly to the party in question, formally articulate charges during depositions and interrogations, and ensure ongoing communication with the accused and their legal representation regarding case updates.
- Foster opportunities for visitation by relatives of both accused individuals and detainees, as well as facilitate telephonic correspondence between them, in strict adherence to the protocols outlined by correctional facilities.
- Implement medical care facilities within detention and transfer centers, overseen by the Ministry of Health, to ensure the provision of necessary healthcare services.
- Facilitating access to appropriate medical care and sanitation services for female detainees is imperative to uphold standards of humane treatment.
- Implementing specialized training programs aimed at equipping forensic investigators within the Ministry of Interior, and relevant stakeholders, with techniques for combatting torture and other forms of inhumane treatment is essential.
- Ensuring that the investigative process, post-arrest, is promptly undertaken by a designated judicial authority within a prescribed timeframe, thereby mitigating any potential misconduct by security personnel conducting investigations.
- It is imperative to apprise defendants of their legal rights comprehensively, including the entitlement to legal representation, the privilege against self-incrimination until counsel is present, and the freedom to provide statements without coercion.
- Recognizing that the right to legal counsel extends beyond trial proceedings, law enforcement personnel should be cognizant of the defendant's entitlement to legal representation during all phases of the investigative process.
- Ensure that detention is conducted exclusively by legally sanctioned and authorized institutions in adherence to national statutes and international human rights protocols. Simultaneously, transparency should be upheld regarding the security authorities responsible for the detention, the imperative circumstances necessitating detention, and the designated locations of detainment.
- Foster an understanding within security forces that the confession of the accused does not singularly constitute evidence of guilt. Encourage the pursuit of diverse evidentiary avenues, encompassing witness testimonies, physical manifestations, photographic and videographic documentation, as well as documentary proof.
- Guarantee adequate compensation for detainees subjected to torture.
- Facilitate enhanced communication and coordination among all pertinent agencies tasked with justice administration through structured case management gatherings. Such initiatives would promote lateral accountability, fortify judicial oversight, bolster operational efficacy, and mitigate instances of unlawful protracted pretrial detention.

- In constituting a pertinent committee to address allegations of torture, ensure representation from stakeholders such as the Judicial Council, the prosecutor general's office, law enforcement, corrections, the legal profession, and civil society entities.

Committed to eradicating domestic violence

- Empower the provincial center homicide investigation offices, leveraging their specialized proficiency, to undertake inquiries into domestic violence incidents.
- Establish police precincts within provincial centers under the purview of the Ministry of Interior to meticulously investigate all occurrences of arson, self-immolation, and instances of violence, ensuring distinct documentation.
- Deploy female law enforcement officers during the conveyance of female detainees and convicts, particularly in peri-urban regions.
- Place significant emphasis on imposing the most stringent penalties on individuals legally possessing weapons and employing them for lethal purposes, including targeted violence against women.
- Extend the scope of the arrest warrant to encompass all entry and exit points, including airports, border crossings, checkpoints, police precincts, and judicial facilities, in order to enhance the likelihood of apprehending the suspect. It is imperative to disseminate a photograph for streamlined coordination among stakeholders, expediting the apprehension and lawful processing of the individual.
- Inform the prosecutor general promptly about any transgressions or grievances brought forth to the administrative department of the detention and transfer center concerning instances of violence targeting women and children. This proactive approach ensures swift legal recourse and underscores the commitment to upholding the rights of vulnerable populations.
- Incorporate a module dedicated to women's rights and the mitigation of domestic violence within the training curriculum of pertinent law enforcement entities. This initiative aims to cultivate a heightened awareness and sensitivity among security personnel toward addressing gender-based violence, thereby fostering a safer and more equitable society.

Regarding the right to freedom of expression and access to information:

- Uphold the sanctity of peaceful assembly and ensure accountability for all transgressions, providing adequate safeguarding for journalists, reporters, media personnel, and human rights advocates. Trained personnel should be deployed in the initial phase of any peaceful demonstration or assembly, with a focus on upholding both individual and public rights.
- Prioritize the implementation of training programs for security forces, acquainting them with international norms and protocols for engaging with journalists, activists, and human rights defenders.
- Implement robust accountability measures in response to allegations of violations against freedom of expression, conducting thorough, prompt, effective, and transparent

investigations into claims of constraints on public gatherings. The findings of such inquiries should be promptly disclosed to the public.

Committed to organizing demonstrations

- The Erbil Police Civil Activities Department recommends enhanced training for Ministry of Interior personnel, as per their guidance.

Dedicated to finding missing children in Halabja

Coordinate with the Ministry of Finance to disburse financial entitlements to Kink College to complete the comparison of blood samples.

Ministry of Finance and Economy

Out of the (7) recommendations submitted to the Ministry of Finance and Economy in 2022, (3) recommendations have been implemented, (3) recommendations have not been implemented and (1) recommendation is in the process of implementation. Compared to 2023, the implemented recommendations have increased to (4) recommendations the non-implemented recommendations have decreased to (2) recommendations, and the recommendations in the implementation stage is (1) recommendation. In this regard the implementation rate becomes (64.3%)

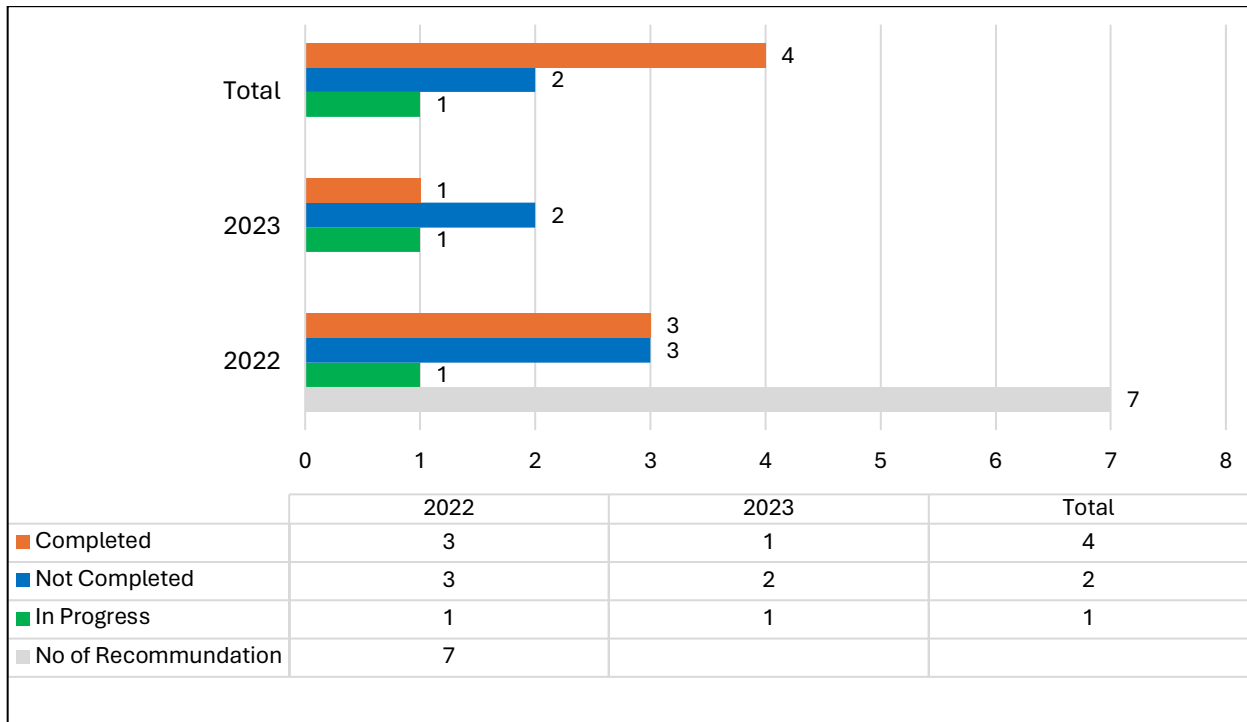


Figure 14: Implementation of Recommendations Related to the Ministry of Finance and Economy

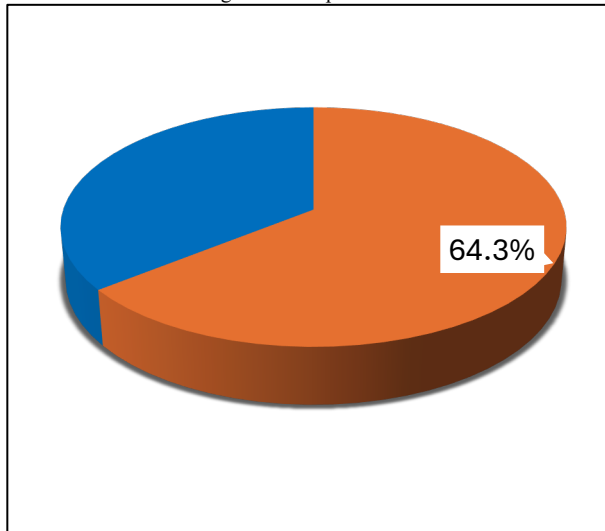


Figure-15 Rates of recommendation execution for 2022-2023

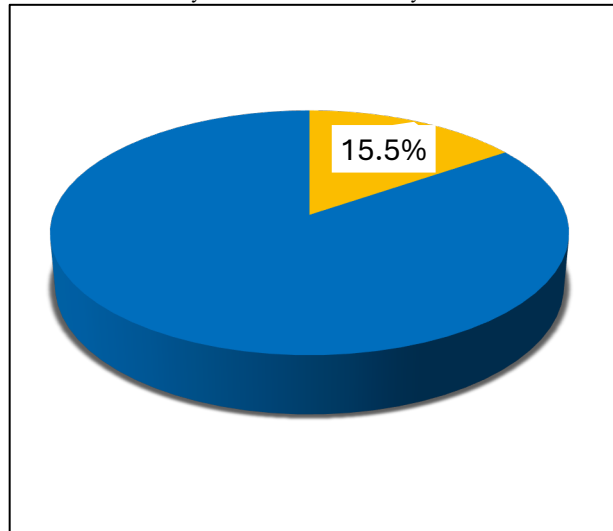


Figure-16 Effort rate of the ministry to completed the recommendation

Implemented Recommendations

1. Promote the social, economic, and cultural rights of persons with disabilities.
2. Promote efforts to combat financial and administrative corruption in full compliance with international law, in order to ensure equal access to public services.
3. Continue efforts to promote the rule of law and ensure the administration of justice in an independent and impartial manner by fighting corruption and preventing impunity.
4. Develop capacity and resources for stakeholders to collect statistics and data related to people with disabilities.

Unmet Recommendations

1. Facilitating the integration of individuals with disabilities into the mainstream workforce by fostering job opportunities, facilitating access to financial resources for entrepreneurial pursuits, offering tailored vocational training, and implementing incentives to promote inclusive hiring practices among employers.
2. Enhancing the representation of individuals with disabilities within the public sector workforce through an augmented allocation of positions specifically designated for this demographic.

Recommendations undergoing implementation:

1. Persist in endeavors aimed at eradicating financial and administrative corruption.

Below are the measures, laws, guidelines, procedures, and practical steps taken in implementing the international recommendations:

Legislative Enactments and Assurance Measures

- The legislative enactment designated as Law No. (9) of 2021, which pertains to the modification of the official enactment of Federal Currency Law No. (7) of 2021, was promulgated through Financial Instruction No. (6).
- The enactment known as Law No. (19) of 2021 represents the initial amendment to the Ministry of Finance and Economy of the Kurdistan Region Law No. (5) of 2010.
- Protocols governing the execution of directives concerning the Prevention of Money Laundering Act No. (10) of 2005, regulating insurance operations, have been established.
- A comprehensive Insurance Bill addressing aspects of healthcare, vehicular coverage, and engineering-related housing has reached finalization and is poised for submission to the Kurdistan Parliament in due course.
- On the 26th of April 2023, the Insurance Regulation Act was sanctioned by the Presidency of the Council of Ministers and subsequently referred to the Kurdistan Parliament for deliberation.

Insurance Companies:

- Introduction of the Kurdistan Enterprise aimed at fostering the insurance industry and fostering healthy competition between private and public sector insurance enterprises, with the objective of bolstering public trust, augmenting revenue streams, and generating employment opportunities.
- Presently, there are (8) insurance enterprises operational within the Kurdistan Region, specifically: (Star Kar, Kar, Dilnya, Asia, Jihan, Koraz, Songa, Ur).
- Additionally, (5) private sector insurance firms are headquartered in Baghdad with branches extending into the Kurdistan Region, including: (Badiya, Dar Al-Thaqa, Al-Hamra, Al-Andalus, and Al-Tazaman).

Accomplishments of the Ministry in the realm of government-corporate agreements

During 2023, the Ministry of Finance and Economy entered into a contractual agreement with private sector insurance entities aimed at elevating the monthly income percentage from 10% to 25%. Additionally, the inauguration of the international gateway (Seriz) connecting the Kurdistan Region and Turkey signifies a pivotal step towards fostering robust trade relations, with an anticipated yield of 25% in revenue earmarked for the Ministry of Finance and Economy. Plans are underway for the inaugural assurance conference to be convened in the near future.

Anti-corruption endeavors

- The Ministry of Finance and Economy has established a collaborative initiative with the Corruption Commission aimed at overseeing and executing the national anti-corruption strategy, as per ministerial decree number (7717) dated 2/8/2022. This collaborative effort is set to persist until 2025.
- Various ministerial-level committees have been convened to scrutinize employee conduct and evaluate the actions of senior officials, including parliamentarians, ministers, advisors, and general managers.
- Robust electronic systems have been integrated across numerous departments to mitigate instances of corruption.

Referral of the case to court

To address issues of impropriety within the General Directorate of Legal Affairs at the Ministry of Finance and Economy by December 1, 2023, numerous petitions have been lodged, all of which have been duly referred to the appropriate judicial authority. These submissions include:

Table 8 Statistics of referral of corruption elimination cases to the courts

Court	Case number
The court of first instance	92
Court of Inquiry	959
Court of Catton	404
The Criminal Court	20
Employees' Court of Justice	43
Administrative Judicial Court	14
Court of Integrity Inquiry	60
The total	1592

Safeguarding the Rights of Individuals with Disabilities

- In accordance with Financial Directive No. (3) dated 25/1/2022, a monthly stipend of (150,000) Iraqi Dinars will be disbursed as assistance to individuals with disabilities who are not in salaried employment, and (100,000) Iraqi Dinars for those who are.
- Universally applied across all directorates falling under the purview of the Ministry of Finance and Economy, Directive No. (14504 dated 6/12/2023) mandates the provision of designated parking spaces for individuals with disabilities at the nearest ingress point, along with the provision of wheelchairs for their convenience.
- Entrusting the Office of Information Technology within the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance and Economy, to integrate requisite technical infrastructure within the biometric registration system for salaried employees, ensuring the comprehensive inclusion of data pertaining to individuals with disabilities.
- Granting exemptions from customs clearance and import duties for vehicles intended for use by individuals with disabilities, under the condition that such vehicles are not intended for commercial transactions. Notably, the General Directorate of Customs within the Ministry of Finance and Economy employs over 10 individuals with disabilities.

Reimbursement of financial obligations from commercial and specialized banking institutions

The General Directorate of Commercial Banks has successfully facilitated the retrieval of certain lenient financial aids via banking establishments in Erbil, Sulaimani, and Duhok since 2022, either through monetary settlement or asset liquidation, thereby transferring the proceeds to the Ministry of Finance and Economy.

Table 9 Credit statistics of commercial banks

loans from commercial banks Until June 2023	
Loan	Money in dinars
Loan	403,867,571,277
Advantage	690,383,513,864
Repayable debt	21,418,156,267
Total outstanding debt	1,072,832,928,874
Cost of property sold	36,522,213,891

Table10 Credit statistics of specialist banks

Specialized Banks June 2023				
Name of the bank	Number of Beneficiaries	Forecast amount paid	The amount has been verbalized.	The outstanding amount from the debtor
The Total of Real Estate	196.721	3.214.598.458.300	1.509.304.652.626	1.667.725.872.399
Tourism	20	2.230.000.000	259.060.000	1.931.940.000
The Total of cultivations	8.471	209.858.853.600	144.012.311.910	63.427.510.190
The Total of Residence	22.054	577.397.891.750	216.174.137.900	310.292.486.850
The Total of Industries	135	43.633.076.000	24.746.791.500	18.079.575.250
The Total	227.401	4.047.718.279.650	1.939.496.953.936	2.061.457.384.689

This document pertains to the assessment of pension transactions.

In collaboration between the Kurdistan Regional Government and UNDP, a digital platform known as the Pension Information System has been devised for the General Directorate of Pensions within the Ministry of Finance. This system facilitates electronic pension transactions, streamlining processes and minimizing procedural redundancies. Additionally, it establishes an organized framework for pension transactions, thereby reducing the likelihood of errors, while also fostering interconnectivity among all pension departments.

My Account Initiative:

The ongoing initiative, the Account Project, is presently in the implementation phase. It is anticipated that by year's end, all employed personnel will be equipped with bank accounts, facilitating electronic disbursement of their salaries. This endeavor stands to catalyze endeavors aimed at combating financial impropriety and administrative malpractice, thereby fostering an environment of fairness and equity.

Customs and Border Crossing Surveillance

- The Customs Oversight Division conducts thorough inspections, monitors, and conducts audits of manifests, accounting receipts (37A), and inspection records, and takes appropriate legal measures against instances of corruption and smuggling.
- The management system for border crossings has been modernized by the Kurdistan Regional Government General Directorate of Customs, incorporating electronic solutions for enhanced efficiency and oversight.

Management of expenditures

- The KRG Management Financial System (KMFS) stands as a pivotal initiative effectively curbing superfluous spending. Over the course of 2022 and 2023, approximately \$275 million in extraneous expenditures has been successfully mitigated.

Necessary measures to implement the recommendations of the Ministry of Finance and Economy

Following an extensive series of workshops and roundtable discussions, the Office of the Coordinator for International Advocacy has proactively initiated tailored strategies. These initiatives have been expressly communicated by the Office of the Prime Minister to pertinent stakeholders, including the Ministry of Finance and Economy, with a firm commitment to aligning with international standards within the prescribed timeframe stipulated by the overarching plan.

Dedicated to human organ donation and transplantation

- Provide a budget, take necessary mechanisms and measures, and issue special instructions to implement the law.

Regarding drugs and psychotropic substances:

- Direct resources (Fund for Combating and Treating Drug Addicts) from seized assets in cases involving such substances, ensuring fines commensurate with legal penalties for drug-related offenses as stipulated by pertinent legislation. These allocations originate from contributions by local or international benefactors aimed at facilitating the establishment of rehabilitation facilities and the provisioning of state-of-the-art medical apparatus and amenities for these centers.

Regarding the rights of individuals with disabilities:

- A comprehensive assessment of remuneration for individuals with disabilities, factoring in both their level of disability and marital status, in accordance with the pertinent legislation, specifically Law No. (22) of 2011, as amended, concerning the Rights and Privileges of Persons with Disabilities.

- Implementation of quotas whereby 5% of positions in the public sector and 3% in the private sector are allocated to individuals with disabilities.
- Reimbursement of marriage advances for individuals with disabilities, those with visual impairments, and those facing physical challenges.
- Establishment of efficient mechanisms within banking institutions to facilitate timely salary disbursement.
- Creation of a foundational framework for accurately diagnosing disability rates.
- Ensuring accessibility by establishing internal departments catering to the needs of the visually impaired residing outside urban centers within institutes overseen by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs.

Ministry of Natural Resources

Out of the (3) recommendations submitted to the Ministry of Natural Resources in 2022, (1) recommendation has been implemented, and there were no recommendations that have not been implemented, and (2) recommendations remain in the process of implementation. Compared to 2023, the number of recommendations implemented has increased to (2) recommendations and the number of recommendations under implementation has increased to (1) recommendation. In this regard the implementation rate becomes (83.3%)

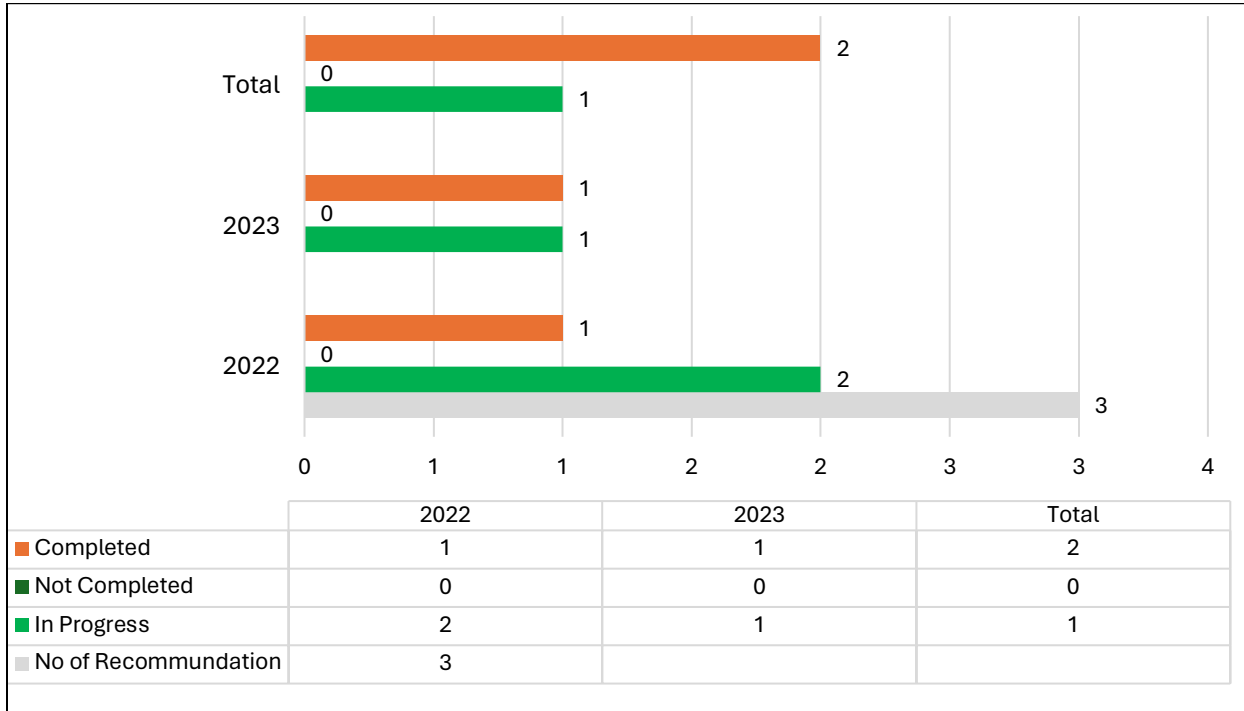


Figure 17: Implementation of Recommendations Related to the Ministry of Natural Resources

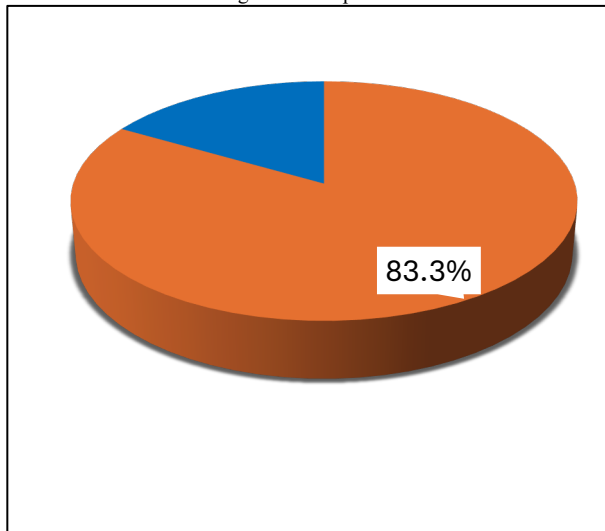


Figure-18 Rates of recommendation execution for 2022-2023

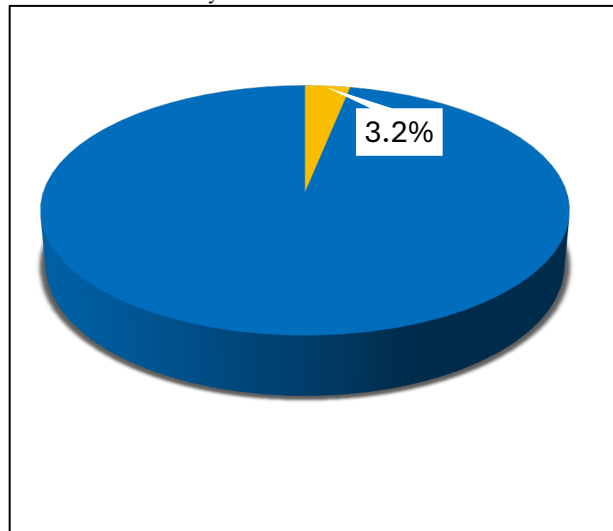


Figure-19 Effort rate of the ministry to completed the recommendations

Implemented Recommendations

1. Persist in enacting environmental conservation measures within a framework oriented towards sustainable development.
2. Endeavor to revise the protocols governing hunting activities while concurrently enhancing safeguards for the preservation of wildlife and avian populations.

Recommendations undergoing implementation:

1. Advancing the recognition of the right to reside in a pristine environment as a fundamental constitutional entitlement, in accordance with Article (33) of the Iraqi Constitution.

Below are the measures, laws, guidelines, procedures, and practical steps taken in implementing the international recommendations:

Guidelines within the framework of implementing international recommendations related to the industrial and oil sectors

- Directive No. (1) of 2020 regarding the licensing and operational procedures for oil refineries.
- Recommendations concerning the importation or re-exportation of potentially hazardous materials for application in the oil and gas sectors.
- Land Compensation Protocol, addressing the responsibility of enterprises to provide annual rental compensation to landholders situated within designated oil well drilling zones.
- Legislation governing the registration procedures for service-oriented enterprises.

The right to live in a clean environment as a constitutional right of the individual

The entitlement to inhabit a pristine habitat as enshrined within the constitutional framework is upheld by the Directorate of Health, Safety, and Environment under the auspices of the Ministry of Natural Resources. This executive arm of environmental stewardship diligently upholds the individual's right to a clean environment as stipulated in Article 33 of the Iraqi Constitution. Preceding the commencement of any project, corporations are mandated to furnish a comprehensive report to the Ministry, encompassing facets pertinent to the preservation of cultural heritage, flora, and fauna. These reports undergo meticulous scrutiny, culminating in a thorough evaluation within a stipulated three-month period, during which the Ministry furnishes discerning interpretation and analysis.

Implementation of precise directives in petroleum fields

Oil exports have been temporarily halted since March 2023, following the ruling by the Paris Chamber of Trade arbitration court mandating the cessation of crude oil production and operations in the majority of oil fields. Nevertheless, the teams responsible for health, safety, and environmental concerns have diligently overseen the adherence to ministry directives and guidelines within the oil fields.

Legislation such as Law No. 22 of 2007, pertaining to Oil and Gas regulations in the Kurdistan Region, mandates that corporations adhere to environmental stewardship principles, safeguarding both the regional ecosystem and the integrity of oil field environments. Complementing this, Instruction No. (1) of 2015, delineating Environmental Impact Assessment protocols for oil operations and duly gazette in the Kurdistan region, serves as a proactive measure against ecological degradation and pollution within the area.

Regulatory Framework for Environmental Conservation

In the Kurdistan Region, environmental conservation is upheld through a triad of legislative instruments: the Environmental Protection and Rehabilitation Law, the Oil and Gas Law, and the Joint Production Contracts. These enactments mandate companies to undertake comprehensive environmental impact assessments prior to initiating any commercial or industrial operations, thereby ensuring adequate redress for potential adverse effects on agricultural lands and surrounding ecosystems.

To mitigate the influx of deleterious fuel commodities and prohibit their circulation within domestic markets, a comprehensive initiative was undertaken in 2023. A total of 41,508 assessments were meticulously conducted across all provincial oil and minerals directorates and autonomous administrations under the purview of the Ministry of Natural Resources. Remarkably, a mere 2,841 instances yielded unfavorable results, underscoring the efficacy of these stringent measures.

Certification of Enterprises

Following a comprehensive assessment of corporate documentation, the Ministry will furnish three distinct certifications for each submission. In instances where the documentation meets all requisites satisfactorily, a certificate of endorsement will be granted, allowing the company to proceed with its operations. In cases where discrepancies are identified, a conditional certificate will be provided, affording the company an opportunity to rectify any noted deficiencies. Conversely, if the documentation fails to adhere to the statutory regulations and Ministry guidelines, a certificate of non-compliance will be issued.

Conservation of Fauna and Avifauna

In accordance with collaborative contractual agreements, corporations are obliged to allocate funds to the Environmental Endowment annually. They are required to adhere to global benchmarks governing the conduct of the petroleum sector, as well as comply with the regulatory framework of the Kurdistan Region, ensuring the mitigation of environmental degradation and preservation of ecological integrity. Such obligations encompass safeguarding flora, fauna, land assets, agricultural territories, and aquaculture resources.

Additional responsibilities outlined in the contracts entail the preservation of environmental integrity throughout the pipeline's construction phase, along with the adherence to international oil industry operational norms regarding the decommissioning or relinquishment of the contractual territory.

Ministry of Health

Out of the (36) recommendations submitted to the Ministry of Health in 2022, (11) recommendations have been implemented, (18) recommendations have not been implemented and (7) recommendations were in the process of implementation. Compared to 2023, the number of implemented recommendations has increased to (22) recommendations, the number of non-implemented recommendations has decreased to (3) recommendations, and the number of recommendations in the process of implementation also reached (11) recommendations. In this regard the implementation rate becomes (76.4%).

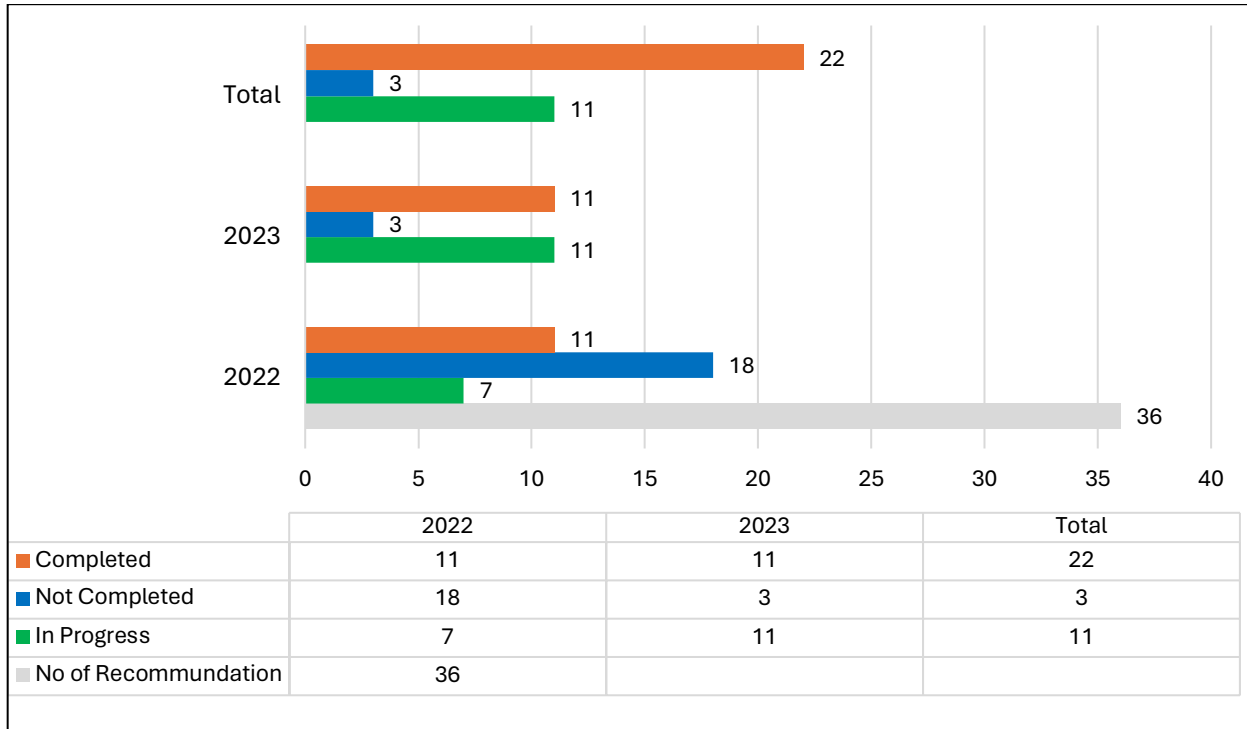


Figure 20: Implementation of Recommendations Related to the Ministry of Health

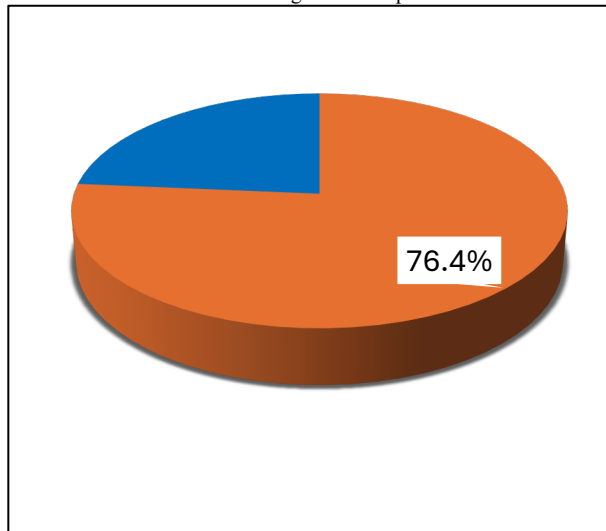


Figure-21 Rates of recommendation execution for 2022-2023

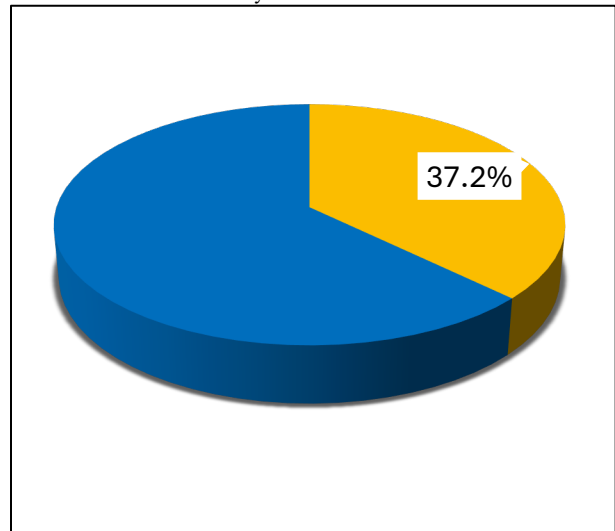


Figure-22 Effort rate of the ministry to completed the recommendations

Implemented Recommendations:

1. Promptly undertake measures to furnish comprehensive medical, psychological, and material assistance, alongside other requisite forms of aid to affected individuals. Ensure equitable compensation, encompassing restoration of entitlements, restitution, rehabilitation, redress, and assurances against recurrence.
2. Institute stringent quality assurance protocols for imported pharmaceuticals.
3. Develop standardized procurement documentation for medicines, medical equipment, and associated services in alignment with overarching agreements, while leveraging international standards to streamline procurement processes, fostering both open and selective competition, domestically and internationally, as implemented by regional contracting authorities
4. Commit adequate human, technical, and financial resources towards the rehabilitation efforts and provision of mental health services, sanitation facilities, secure accommodations, education, and vocational training.
5. Facilitate psychological and societal assistance and guarantee healthcare accessibility within refugee settlements.
6. Gather demographically classified data concerning HIV infection and sexually transmitted diseases, while upholding the confidentiality of patient records, and guaranteeing availability of age-appropriate services and treatments in sexual health and reproductive care.
7. Advocate for initiatives aimed at realizing the strategic objectives pertaining to recovery and food security during the designated period of (2018-2022).
8. Assure and streamline the accessibility of fundamental amenities such as social welfare and healthcare services for all constituents within the region.
9. Enhance the scope and availability of healthcare services across all territories, including refugee settlements, through the allocation of sufficient resources from healthcare facility and nursing home budgets, aimed at delivering comprehensive and economical services, encompassing sexual health and reproductive care, inclusive of safe termination of pregnancies, particularly in rural and secluded locales.
10. Sustain endeavors to advance healthcare provisions for maternal, neonatal, pediatric, and adolescent populations.
11. Endeavor to uphold the provision of potable water and hygienic sanitation services, while prioritizing environmental concerns, fostering accessibility to nutritious sustenance, and bolstering medical facilities within camps, with the overarching objective of dispensing essential pharmaceuticals, vaccinations, and medical provisions.
12. Introduce a regional healthcare coverage statute aimed at fostering universal healthcare accessibility across all societal strata, as exemplified by Health Insurance Legislation No. (22) of 2020 promulgated by the Federal Government.
13. Augment the allocation of fiscal resources earmarked for the healthcare domain.
14. Offer comprehensive training initiatives tailored to professionals within the healthcare sphere.

15. Formulate preemptive strategies geared towards diverse stakeholders to mitigate health risks and proactively combat ailments.
16. Ensure the provision of psychological support for minors subjected to sexual violence, with a steadfast commitment to fostering their mental and physical recuperation and rehabilitation.
17. Implement healthcare initiatives targeting impoverished demographics.
18. Guarantee equitable access to premium healthcare services, inclusive of sexual and reproductive health provisions, for all women and girls with disabilities, while concurrently instituting requisite accommodations to facilitate their engagement with healthcare facilities.
19. Safeguard minors from the perils of violence and exploitation of a sexual nature, and earmark essential resources for their reintegration into societal frameworks.
20. Implement requisite measures to guarantee equitable access to healthcare provisions for every woman and girl with disabilities, encompassing sexual and reproductive health services.
21. Spearheaded additional initiatives aimed at enhancing the well-being of minors, with a particular emphasis on facilitating their access to education, healthcare, potable water, and safeguarding them against all manifestations of violence.
22. Ensure the provision of premium healthcare services, including sexual and reproductive health services, to every woman and girl with disabilities, alongside the provision of suitable facilities to cater to their needs.

Unmet Recommendations

1. Advocate for the reclassification of drug abusers as patients, facilitating access to comprehensive psychological and medical interventions aimed at rehabilitation and recovery.
2. Formulate comprehensive rehabilitation program strategies designed to address the multifaceted needs of individuals grappling with substance abuse.
3. Institute robust oversight protocols to safeguard against instances of torture and other violations of human dignity within facilities where individuals with disabilities are detained, encompassing mental health institutions, correctional facilities, long-term care facilities, and rehabilitation centers.

Recommendations undergoing implementation:

1. Enhance surveillance measures to address illicit drug trafficking across regional border checkpoints.
2. Establish specialized centers for the rehabilitation and care of individuals grappling with substance abuse disorders, including addiction and associated mental health conditions.
3. Initiate comprehensive training programs aimed at enhancing the skills of medical practitioners, pharmacists, and personnel, while incentivizing their dedication to the holistic recovery of individuals afflicted by addiction, encompassing physical, mental, and social facets.
4. Incorporate educational modules on the adverse effects of substance abuse into academic curricula.

5. Provide support to stakeholders and subject matter experts, fostering their engagement in targeted research endeavors.
6. The Committee advises the Member State to bolster efforts toward enacting and enforcing legislation governing narcotics and psychotropic substances. Furthermore, it encourages the establishment of dedicated rehabilitation facilities mandated by law, alongside the dissemination of tailored awareness campaigns aimed at adolescents through educational initiatives and media outreach. Additionally, the Member State is urged to ensure accessible avenues for drug addiction treatment.
7. Advocate for the legalization of abortion under circumstances such as battery, incest, endangerment to the life or well-being of the expectant mother, or potential fetal anomalies, ensuring accessible and safe abortion services, alongside comprehensive post-abortion care administered by proficient medical personnel.
8. Propose revisions to the 1985 Guidelines for the Ethical Practice of Medicine to guarantee the voluntary and fully informed consent of individuals with disabilities prior to their inclusion in any medical or scientific studies.
9. Address the issue of excessive spending within private healthcare institutions through strategic fiscal management measures.
10. Establish protocols governing the prescription practices of physicians and the dispensation of psychotropic medications or stimulants by pharmacists.
11. Place emphasis on the formulation of a comprehensive strategy to revitalize healthcare infrastructure in regions liberated from the influence of armed extremist factions. This initiative aims to facilitate the construction and refurbishment of healthcare facilities, as well as the deployment of qualified medical personnel and the provision of necessary medical resources.

Below are the measures, laws, guidelines, procedures, and practical steps taken in implementing the international recommendations:

Implementation of the Health Insurance Act:

The proposed Kurdistan Health Insurance Law has been meticulously crafted, advancing through requisite procedural phases, and now awaits deliberation by the Council of the Ministry (Shora) of Justice.

Enhance allocations for the healthcare sector

On the 20th of June, 2022, and the 7th of May, 2023, the Ministry of Health formally petitioned the Council of Ministers for augmentation of the dedicated budgetary provisions for the Ministry. Subsequently, the Council of Ministers endorsed the request.

Offer training to individuals employed within the healthcare sector.

Comprehensive instruction on mental health conditions is integrated into the medical curriculum, ensuring that recent medical graduates acquire this essential knowledge. Furthermore, seasoned psychiatrists undergo continuous training to enhance their proficiency in managing and treating individuals grappling with addiction.

Comprehensive instruction on mental health conditions is integrated into the medical curriculum, ensuring that recent medical graduates acquire this essential knowledge.

Revision of the Schedule of Drug Listings

Pursuant to Article (46/Item 2) of the Legislation Addressing Narcotic and Psychotropic Substances, Law No. (1) of 2020, the Minister of Health holds the authority to modify the classification of substances outlined therein:

- The reclassification of Methamphetamine/Crystal, transitioning it from Schedule No. (6) to Schedule No. (1) within the framework of the Law on Combating Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, in alignment with the directives outlined in Statement No. (3) on 19/1/2023.
- The inclusion of pharmaceutical substances (Carbamazepine, Trihexyphenidyl, Gabapentin, Pregabalin) within the parameters of Schedule No. (8) of the aforementioned Act, as detailed in Statement No. (3) dated 19/1/2023.
- The integration of Tramadol into the confines of Schedule No. (8) of the Anti-Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, pursuant to the provisions articulated in Statement No. (6) issued on 24/2/2023.

Enhance surveillance measures to deter drug trafficking across border checkpoints.

The protocols governing the importation of regulated substances entail stringent adherence to regulations set forth by the Iraqi Ministry of Health and the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB). These regulations pertain to the import of controlled pharmaceuticals and extend from their arrival in the Kurdistan Region until their administration to patients under meticulous supervision, as outlined by pertinent authorities.

Regarding the historical utilization of regulated chemicals as foundational components for pharmaceutical production under the guise of applications within the oil sector in contravention of established legal protocols, to address this matter in a systematic and compliant manner, the Ministry of Health has duly apprised both the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Natural Resources of the imperative for substances delineated in the appended schedules of Law No. (1) of 2020 to undergo requisite approval processes by the Ministry of Health. Regrettably, implementation of this directive has yet to transpire.

Establishment of healthcare facilities for the rehabilitation of individuals struggling with substance abuse:

- The Ministry of Health, through written communication No. (20562) dated 18/9/2023, has formally requested the allocation of (10) billion dinars to facilitate the establishment of two specialized addiction treatment centers in Sulaimani and Duhok. Subsequently, the Ministry Council, in correspondence marked (12908) on 12/10/2023, has granted initial approval for this endeavor. Presently, the Directorate of Engineering Affairs within the Ministry of Health is actively engaged in the conceptualization and development of detailed plans for these two facilities.
- Moreover, in Erbil, the United Arab Emirates has pledged support for the refurbishment, preparation, and enhancement of two educational institutions along with a healthcare center in Shaqlawa.
- Approval of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers has been obtained for the construction of a center in Erbil at a cost of (4.800.000.000) four billion eight hundred million dinars, which the Ministry of Social Affairs will work in.
- In coordination with the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, a rehabilitation center for drug users and addicts was opened in Sulaimani province.
- In coordination with the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, the Mind Control Treatment Program for Drug Addicts in Duhok Correctional Institution for Adults, this project was launched on August 22, 2023. The aim of the project is to work to change irrational and negative thinking about drugs Ability to deal with mental problems.

Challenges to opening rehabilitation centers for addicts:

- Economic constraints within the Kurdistan Region pose a challenge in securing adequate funding for the establishment of rehabilitation centers for individuals grappling with addiction.
- The scarcity of qualified professionals specializing in psychosocial research contributes to prolonged timelines in the implementation of rehabilitation initiatives.
- There is a discernible, albeit concerning, upward trend in the prevalence of substance uses disorders, warranting a proactive approach to addressing this societal issue.
- Presently, institutional priorities predominantly emphasize preventative measures aimed at curbing the proliferation of addiction, potentially diverting attention from the imperative of establishing rehabilitation infrastructure.

Integration of drugs into curricula

The seamless integration of drug awareness and prevention modules into educational curricula has been a focal point of collaborative initiatives between the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education.

Developing drug prevention strategies for various stakeholders.

In this regard, the High Committee for Combating Substance Abuse has undertaken the following initiatives:

- Coordinating with the Media and Information Office to produce a series of educational short films broadcast on television channels and disseminated through social media platforms. Additionally, the construction of informational billboards, fully funded by the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, has been initiated.
- Instituting a ministerial committee within the Ministry of Health through Ministerial Order No. (24336) dated 20/11/2 to enhance parental awareness regarding the early signs of substance abuse among adolescents. Educational materials in the form of booklets will be distributed as part of this effort.
- Establishing a national awareness campaign committee comprising representatives from pertinent ministries and agencies.

Support for conducting studies and research

- The High Committee for Combating Drugs and Psychotropic Substances has earnestly endeavored to prioritize scholarly investigations. In alignment with this commitment, ministerial decree number (7906) issued on 28/11/2023, established a dedicated committee tasked with orchestrating a scholarly symposium in collaboration with the Ministry of Higher Education.

Ensure the provision of psychological support for minors who are survivors of sexual violence:

- Collaborate with UNICEF to establish specialized facilities in Erbil (2), Duhok, and Soran, dedicated to addressing the needs of individuals impacted by violence and sexual exploitation, particularly women and children. These centers have undergone comprehensive training in psychological and social care protocols, ensuring their capacity to deliver holistic support services. They offer a range of medical and psychological interventions, with seamless referrals to hospital facilities when required.
- Facilitate the establishment of three psychiatric hospitals in partnership with the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs. Under this initiative, the Ministry of Health will oversee the medical treatment of patients, while the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs will undertake the crucial task of monitoring their progress and well-being.

Healthcare initiatives for poor populations

- The Ministry of Health extends complimentary healthcare provisions to the households of fallen heroes, individuals with disabilities, and those with unique requirements. For instance, public hospitals facilitated (4502) cesarean sections and (7802) natural childbirths, alongside various surgical procedures. Public health facilities witnessed (14,499,152) patient consultations, with (514,789) citizens receiving inpatient care.

Coordination with international stakeholders and civil society organizations

- A significant memorandum of understanding was formalized among the Swiss Cross, Barzani Charitable Foundation, and the Ministry of Health to facilitate approximately 1,000 surgical interventions for individuals affected by conflict, displacement, accidents, burns, and rare congenital conditions.
- This milestone signifies a pivotal advancement in fostering international partnerships aimed at enhancing the healthcare sector, ensuring access to surgical resources, establishing specialized corrective surgery facilities, and orchestrating collaborative efforts within the Kurdistan Board to elevate the proficiency and competency of medical practitioners in the Kurdistan Region, and establishing medical treatment hubs across Iraq and the broader Middle East.
- The initiative to support intricate and uncommon surgical procedures will be inaugurated with innovative methodologies and a comprehensive framework. It aims to mitigate the repercussions of accidents, thereby reducing the incidence of disabilities, in alignment with the Barzani Charitable Foundation. This initiative involves deploying medical teams to administer treatment and conduct surgeries, bolstering the capacity and expertise of physicians in Kurdistan, thereby obviating the necessity for patients from the Kurdistan Region to seek medical assistance abroad. The initiative encompasses the following facets:
 - Orthopedic, fracture, joint, pelvic and knee surgery.
 - Cosmetic surgery and rehabilitation after burn.
 - Facial and maxillofacial surgery.
 - Hand and orthopedic surgeries.
 - Corrective surgery for congenital lip and palate disease.
 - Thoracic surgery after heart and cancer surgery.
- In accordance with the terms outlined in the agreement, it has been designated that two additional realms within the surgical domain are slated for future development. Specifically, these entail pediatric and adult cardiac surgical interventions, along with the establishment of a specialized facility dedicated to breast cancer treatment.

Enabling abortion in circumstances of assault and sexual violence

- There lacks a legal foundation for permitting abortion in instances of assault, incest, and jeopardy to the well-being of expectant mothers, as such actions are proscribed under the Iraqi Penal Code, as well as in accordance with the edict of the KRG Fatwa Council. Nonetheless, in cases where pregnancy poses a threat to maternal health, a scientific committee within all public directorates, comprising diverse experts, convenes to deliberate upon whether to proceed with the pregnancy or pursue abortion.
- The incidence of abortions in 2022, as determined by the committee's verdict in the Kurdistan Region, amounted to (346) cases.

Amendments to the 1985 Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of Medicine

- Efforts are underway to revise the regulations governing medical professional ethics within the region. The Scientific Research Department of the Ministry of Health prioritizes considerations such as patient safety and ensuring the voluntary and well-informed consent of individuals with disabilities. Recently, following deliberations on international human rights protocols and recommendations concerning the involvement of research subjects, the Ministry of Health underscores the necessity for all research inquiries to originate from accredited academic institutions or recognized establishments. Furthermore, all research endeavors must be accompanied by comprehensive proposals outlining the scope of the study and the utilization of data sourced from our agencies.

Specialized documentation has been developed to facilitate this process.

Offering healthcare provisions tailored to the needs of women and girls with disabilities.

The subsequent healthcare provisions are extended to female individuals with disabilities without charge, overseen by specialists and pertinent professionals proficient in this domain:

- Provision of healthcare and counseling services tailored to the needs of young women and expectant mothers at family care health centers and facilities throughout the Kurdistan Region, overseen by medical specialists.
- Delivery of medical rehabilitation services and expert guidance on natural treatment methodologies at accredited medical rehabilitation centers.
- Facilitation and production of customized assistive devices for individuals with disabilities, including prosthetics and orthotics, within designated centers under the auspices of the Ministry of Health, in collaboration with the International Red Cross.
- Distribution of electric wheelchairs to enhance mobility and accessibility for individuals with disabilities residing in the Kurdistan Region.

Deliver dental healthcare services tailored to the unique needs of children with disabilities.

In a pioneering initiative, a dedicated dental facility catering to individuals with disabilities has been inaugurated in Erbil. This facility offers complementary services, with a particular focus on individuals diagnosed with (Autism, Down syndrome, and cerebral palsy). Surgical procedures are conducted on Mondays, with a considerable number already completed, serving over 200 children. Registration of children with disabilities for these specialized services is facilitated through Helena Hospital.

Efforts are underway to optimize expenditures within the private healthcare sector.

Considerable progress has been made in addressing this matter. Notably, a dedicated committee has diligently crafted guidelines for the restructuring of both public and private healthcare domains over a two-year period. Upon endorsement by the Ministry of Health Council, these guidelines will be presented to the Cabinet. The proposed measures encompass:

- Establishing standardized pricing frameworks and performance evaluations for private hospitals.
- Rationalizing the financial remuneration structures for medical professionals, staff, and healthcare facilities.
- Streamlining the ownership and organizational framework of private hospitals.

Special measures with a prescription

The Ministry of Health has established a specialized committee tasked with formulating comprehensive protocols concerning prescription practices and the utilization of controlled substances within both public and private healthcare institutions. Progress regarding the committee's deliberations is currently in its concluding phase.

Monitoring children's health

Monitoring the health of minors is a pivotal function overseen by the Ministry of Health, ensuring comprehensive care from birth onwards within healthcare facilities. This encompasses the provision of essential vaccinations, diligent surveillance of growth metrics facilitated by healthcare centers, and meticulous assessment of their nutritional well-being, with a paramount emphasis on fostering optimal health outcomes.

At the onset of the forthcoming academic year, a joint committee comprising representatives from the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education will embark on school visits aimed at augmenting students' health consciousness. This initiative will encompass comprehensive student health assessments designed to safeguard their well-being. Furthermore, at the commencement of the academic term, rigorous measures will be undertaken to ensure the cleanliness of school drinking water reservoirs, alongside the facilitation of access to potable water through designated school outlets.

Composition and attributes of novel pharmaceutical labels

1. Anti-fraud technology

The technology implemented in the label represents an innovative advancement pioneered by a distinguished Korean enterprise, establishing it as the paramount purveyor of such advancements globally. As the exclusive distributor of this groundbreaking technology in the Kurdistan Region and throughout Iraq, our company has integrated it into the new pharmaceutical labels, rendering them impervious to replication, thus safeguarding their authenticity.

2. Operate in an offline capacity.

The hallmark feature of the material employed in this adhesive emblem is its propensity to alter color upon proximity to the MTX section magnet. Consequently, prospective pharmaceutical purchasers may avail themselves of the magnets and educational displays now ubiquitously accessible in all pharmacies, or alternatively, employ any conventional magnets offline. This measure serves to authenticate the genuineness of medicinal products, assuring citizens of their authenticity.

3. Engage in digital endeavors

This label is imprinted with a Quick Response (QR) code intricately linked to the KMCA (Kurdistan Medicines Control Authority) system. Consequently, individuals have the capability to scan the code to access comprehensive details encompassing the drug's nomenclature, taxation identification, nation of provenance, expiration timeline, pricing structure, and product status. This information is seamlessly provided in three languages: Kurdish, Arabic, and English.

4. Sticker quality and cut on the sticker

Esteemed consideration has been given to the selection of superior-grade stickers for the printing of medication labels, ensuring optimal quality. Furthermore, meticulous attention has been directed towards the precision of the sticker cuts, thereby mitigating any possibility of detachment or reuse post-application. This measure serves to uphold the integrity of pharmaceutical labeling, safeguarding against any potential misuse or misidentification of medications.

5. Price Standardization and Harmonization

The KMCA establishes the pricing framework for pharmaceuticals, which is subsequently affixed onto product labels. This measure has not only influenced the pricing dynamics of medicines but has also fostered uniformity across pharmacies, constraining their discretion in sales practices.

6. Details on the label

Apart from the medication's pricing, the label will feature pertinent information such as the medication's name, the importing entity, tax identification number, and order reference.

Monitoring pharmaceuticals in pharmacies, corporations, and pharmaceutical establishments.

In order to regulate the importation and confiscation of fraudulent and outdated pharmaceuticals, task forces under the purview of the Ministry of Health oversee establishments specializing in pharmaceutical imports and distribution within markets, administering penalties to offenders accordingly.

Market observation visits statistics

As part of the ongoing initiatives led by the Drug Supervision Committee of the Ministry of Health, a series of endeavors have been undertaken in the Kurdistan Region to oversee the market between January 1st, 2023, and December 7th, 2023. These efforts encompassed various activities aimed at monitoring market dynamics.

Table 11 Statistics of Market Monitoring Visits

Pharmacy	Visit	286
	Close	63
Company	Visit	108
	Close	20
Nursing Home	Visit	78
	Close	29
Drug store	Visit	68
	Close	11

Collaboration between the Ministry of Health of the Kurdistan Regional Government and the Federal Ministry of Health:

1. Regarding health promotion: Facilitating immunization initiatives and addressing suboptimal vaccination coverage. Furthermore, regular updates on communicable diseases are transmitted to Baghdad utilizing the (Epi Info) platform, with a continuous exchange of data concerning (Immediately Notifiable Diseases).
2. In the realm of healthcare provision: In 2023, the federal administration allocated (500) five hundred electric mobility aids to artificial limb centers within the region, alongside pharmaceuticals, medical resources, and laboratory equipment as detailed in the accompanying table.

Table 12 Amount of funds provided by the Federal Government to the Region

Medicine in Iraqi Dinars	Medical Supplies in Iraqi Dinars	Laboratory supplies in Iraqi Dinars	Total in Iraqi Dinars
147,900,633,521	18,074,882,874	1,785,438,059	167,760,954,4

3. In relation to health plans:

- Facilitation of birth and death registrations, including the execution of the electronic birth registration initiative via the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) system.
- Facilitation of humanitarian assessment and service provision via the HIRAMS system, in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Health and with the invaluable backing of the World Health Organization's partnership with the Ministry of Health.
- Advancement towards digitization of health data under the auspices of the World Health Organization, in harmonious coordination with the Federal Ministry of Health.
- Comprehensive health statistics are systematically relayed on an annual basis to the esteemed Federal Ministry of Health.

Food Health and Safety

The Food Health and Safety Protection Directorate prioritizes safeguarding food safety as a primary responsibility. This is achieved through meticulous examination of all food commodities entering the Kurdistan Region via dedicated food laboratories situated at various border points and checkpoints. Our aim is to proactively avert the importation of any compromised or expired food items, ensuring the well-being of our citizens.

Additionally, we undertake vigilant market surveillance activities to swiftly identify and eliminate any presence of expired food items being circulated to consumers. Collaborative efforts with health surveillance teams deployed by relevant ministries and health departments play a pivotal role in executing this mandate effectively.

Applications of the disabled, short stature, and people with disabilities

On October 25th, 2022, the Office of the Coordinator for International Advocacy convened a roundtable discussion involving various organizations representing individuals with disabilities. Participants included the Kurdistan Women's Association, the Association for the Protection of Disability Rights, the Kurdistan Union of the Visually Impaired, the Kurdistan Association for Individuals of Short Stature, the Autism Association, the Kurdistan Thalassemia Association, the Kurdistan Hemophilia Association, and the (Yes, We Can Network).

At the conclusion of the roundtable discussion, the participating organizations put forth the following proposals:

1. Establish designated accommodations for individuals with disabilities within public spaces and institutions.
2. Implement the placement of specialized signage catering to individuals with disabilities, including those of reduced stature, in thoroughfares, public areas, and institutions.
3. Enhance and expand healthcare services tailored to the needs of individuals with disabilities.
4. Establish accessible training centers and specialized educational programs for individuals with cognitive disabilities within local districts.
5. Ensure the availability of specialized medications tailored to the unique requirements of individuals with specific disabilities.
6. Devote increased attention to the needs of children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. Presently, while 650 children with autism have completed requisite documentation, a mere 76 have been officially registered, signaling a notable gap in support provision.

Addressing the challenge of narcotics and psychotropic substances

As part of the strategic endeavors to execute the Regional Plan for Human Rights, a workshop convened on Tuesday, the 18th of October, 2022, orchestrated by the Office of the Coordinator for International Advocacy. The session focused on actionable strategies to counteract the proliferation of narcotics and psychotropic substances, conducted in partnership with PAO and the Human Network for Health and Humanitarian Development. Distinguished attendees included representatives from the judiciary, parliament, various ministries, as well as pertinent institutions and organizations.

Throughout the workshop, a plethora of constructive suggestions and insightful comments were proffered concerning the Law on Combating Drugs and Psychotropic Substances No.1 of 2020, prompting a collective recognition of the imperative for amendments in the following areas:

Firstly, there is a pressing need to enhance the stringency of penalties associated with drug trafficking, aligning them with the severity of the substances involved. For instance, considering substances like crystal, recognized as highly hazardous within the sixth-grade classification, current penalties appear disproportionate, with mere five-year sentences for its use. Conversely, substances such as heroin and cocaine warrant more stringent punitive measures, with sentences reaching up to 16 years.

Secondly, a meticulous review of legal provisions is imperative. For instance, Article 6 addresses the spectrum of punishment, including temporary and life imprisonment. In contrast, antiquated statutes within the former Iraqi legal framework prescribed penalties spanning from life imprisonment to capital punishment.

Thirdly, there is a necessity to streamline the organizational structure of legal documentation. A notable area for improvement lies in the organization of tables within the law, where instances of redundancy are prevalent. For instance, the repetition of references to heroin across multiple articles, notably Articles (1) and (3), underscores the need for consolidation and clarity. Furthermore, empowering the Minister of Health with the authority to adjust the scheduling of drugs, vested in their role as the chairperson of the High Committee to Combat Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, could enhance responsiveness and efficacy in regulatory measures.

Required actions to enact the directives provided by the Ministry of Health.

Following a comprehensive series of workshops and roundtable discussions, the Office of the Coordinator for International Recommendations has formulated specific measures. These directives, under the auspices of the Prime Minister's Office, have been communicated to pertinent stakeholders, notably the Ministry of Health, with the aim of aligning operational protocols with globally endorsed standards within the stipulated timeframe outlined in the overarching strategy.

Committed to eradicating torture and inhumane treatment:

- Ensure that any statements extracted through coercive means are unequivocally dismissed by the court, with the prosecutor assuming the responsibility of demonstrating that the accused's statements were obtained arbitrarily, to be expunged.
- Implement the establishment of medical care facilities within correctional institutions and detention centers, overseen by the Ministry of Health.
- Upon reception of a detainee from police detention and transfer stations or individuals entering correctional facilities, a thorough medical assessment should be conducted by the healthcare unit, and the findings documented in a comprehensive report, stored in a designated dossier.

Specializing in the administration of correctional facilities and detention centers

- Establishment of medical facilities within correctional institutions encompassing medical personnel, diagnostic specialists, dental units, admission facilities, pharmaceutical provisions, and emergency medical transport services.
- Implementation of a robust mechanism for promptly notifying the appropriate medical authorities of any instances of alleged mistreatment or abuse, ensuring thorough investigation by forensic medical experts.
- Deployment of specialized medical practitioners dedicated to rehabilitation services, fostering comprehensive healthcare support within correctional settings.

Committed to the promotion of human organ donation and transplantation endeavors:

- Formulate and articulate essential protocols regarding the management of human organ storage procedures, and establish effective protocols for engagement with international organ repositories to prevent any inadvertent involvement in human trafficking activities.
- There is a noted discrepancy in the enforcement of Article 11 of the legislation, mandating the maintenance of a comprehensive registry of donors and recipients. Presently, surgical interventions are conducted without stringent adherence to financial qualifications.
- Coordinate and facilitate organ transplant surgeries, with a particular focus on kidney, liver, cell/skin, and bone marrow transplants, to safeguard citizens against potential instances of exploitation and malpractice. This initiative is imperative given the predominant occurrence of such surgeries within private healthcare facilities, largely situated outside the jurisdiction of the Kurdistan Region.
- Implement pertinent measures by establishing or activating central and subsidiary committees across all provinces within the region, aimed at ensuring effective oversight and regulation.
- Institutionalize the operations of said committees, mandating the formulation and adherence to specific protocols and criteria governing the approval process for transplant and donation surgeries.
- Compile a comprehensive roster of beneficiaries and establish a system for prioritizing individuals based on the respective risk profiles and medical exigencies of each case, necessitating seamless coordination among healthcare authorities across various hospital settings.

The Ministry of Health has undertaken the following initiatives to enact the prescribed measures:

- In relation to Article (11) of Law No. (1) of 2018 concerning Organ Donation and Transplantation Procedures for Organ Donation post-brain Death, the implementation of this program in Iraq and the Kurdistan Region has encountered several challenges, including religious, cultural, and societal impediments.

- Hence, there is a need for collaborative efforts with pertinent stakeholders such as the Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs, the Union of Religious Scholars, and the Fatwa Committee of the Region to formulate a comprehensive strategy for its implementation.
- With regards to the establishment of its organ repository, currently, only corneas are procured from deceased donors. However, due to the absence of a structured process for deceased organ donation, the establishment of this repository remains unfeasible.
- In reference to the regulation of organ transplantation surgery within the Kurdistan Region, in alignment with the provisions outlined in Law No. (1) of 2018 concerning human organ donation and transplantation, the Ministry of Health, as the primary executor of this legislation, has undertaken the following initiatives:
 - Release of Directive No. (2) of 2018 pertaining to kidney donation and transplant surgery.
 - Publication of Directive No. (2) of 2022 focusing on liver donation and transplant surgery.
 - Formulation of comprehensive guidelines addressing liver donation and transplant surgery.
 - Establishment of a distinguished committee for organ donation and transplantation within the Ministry, presided over by the Minister of Health and comprising esteemed individuals from various sectors including Health Affairs, seasoned consultants, medical practitioners specializing in organ transplant surgery, and legal scholars. This committee is tasked with devising policies, strategies, and directives for the supervision and execution of the aforementioned program.
 - Appointment of Dr. Abdullah Saeed Abdullah, a distinguished Advisor to the Ministry and Consultant Physician specializing in Kidney Transplant Surgery, to spearhead the organ donation and transplant program within the Ministry's purview.
- The Ministry of Health, in its correspondence numbered (13499) dated 5/6/2023, formally urged the Presidency of the Council of Ministers to consider the establishment of a national center dedicated to organ donation and transplant surgical programs in Erbil. Subsequently, the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, through its official communication numbered (15355) dated 26/11/2023, granted approval for this initiative. Presently, we await the response from the Ministry of Finance and Economy to allocate the requisite budgetary resources.
- - A specialized committee has been convened to deliberate upon and sanction organ donation and transplant surgical procedures across the provinces of Erbil, Duhok, and Sulaimani. Comprising representatives from pertinent sectors including security forces, law enforcement, citizenship, and legal consultancy, this committee operates in alignment with the directives outlined in Instruction No. (2) of 2018. Members of this committee shall undergo rotation every six months to ensure continuity and adherence to regulatory frameworks.

- Within Erbil, Duhok, and Sulaimani provinces, three government-operated facilities sustain ongoing organ transplant surgeries, with a modest volume ranging between 1 to 2 procedures. Additionally, a limited number of private hospitals, namely (3) in Erbil, (1) in Duhok, and (1) in Sulaimani, have been duly licensed to conduct kidney transplant surgeries.
- While strides have been made to facilitate corneal transplantation procedures in Erbil, the region faces a notable challenge due to the dearth of posthumous donors. Consequently, the procurement of corneas is predominantly reliant on international sourcing, reflecting the current state of affairs within the Kurdistan Region.
- With regard to liver transplant surgery, the current absence of this service locally necessitates its provision solely in private hospitals within or beyond the region. The Kurdistan Regional Government undertakes the complete financial coverage of such procedures for its citizens, amounting to US\$32,000 per patient.
- In the case of organ transplantation, such as kidneys and liver, the establishment of a repository is deemed unnecessary. Given the imperative nature of these surgeries, organ transplantations must occur promptly, within hours of organ procurement from donors. These organs are securely stored in hygienic, temperature-controlled environments at 4°C for several hours.
- In order to combat organ trafficking and the illicit trade of organs, the KRG pledges to furnish an advance sum ranging from (5) to (7) million dinars to individuals who opt to donate their organs, particularly kidneys.

Observation: The majority of individuals undergoing kidney transplant surgery originate from central and southern Iraq and are accompanied by companions who volunteer their assistance.

Specific to drugs and psychotropic substances

- Convene consultations with the Federal Ministry of Health and the Pharmacists and Physicians Consortium to establish comprehensive guidelines regarding the usage of pharmaceuticals.
- Define protocols governing physician prescriptions and pharmacist dispensations of psychotropic substances or substances with influential properties.
- Implement robust training programs for pharmacists aimed at enhancing their capacity to recognize addictive substances.
- Establish specialized healthcare centers dedicated to the rehabilitation of individuals struggling with addiction, substance abuse, and related psychological conditions.
- Ensure the provision of holistic psychological and medical interventions to support the reintegration of individuals grappling with addiction into mainstream society.
- Develop and deliver targeted training initiatives for physicians, pharmacists, and healthcare personnel, fostering a supportive environment that incentivizes their commitment to

assisting individuals in their journey toward recovery and optimal health, encompassing physical, mental, and social aspects.

- Promote health literacy initiatives within primary healthcare settings to foster greater public awareness regarding the perils associated with addictive substances.
- Spearheaded initiatives for the advancement of healthcare infrastructure, facilitating strategic research endeavors aimed at addressing substance abuse and related health challenges.

On the matter of the rights of the disabled and individuals with disabilities:

- Facilitate the provision of preventive, therapeutic, and rehabilitation services.
- Guarantee equitable access for all women and girls with disabilities to exemplary healthcare services, encompassing sexual and reproductive health provisions, along with the establishment of requisite measures and amenities.
- Formulate a proficient mechanism for conducting medical assessments for individuals with disabilities who may be subject to instances of violence.

Ministry of Education

Out of the (20) recommendations submitted to the Ministry of Education in 2022, (10) recommendations have been implemented, (5) recommendations have not been implemented and (5) recommendations were in the process of implementation. Compared to 2023, the number of implemented recommendations has increased to (13) recommendations, the number of non-implemented recommendations has decreased to (3) recommendations, and the number of recommendations under implementation has reached (4) recommendations. In this regard the implementation rate becomes (75%).

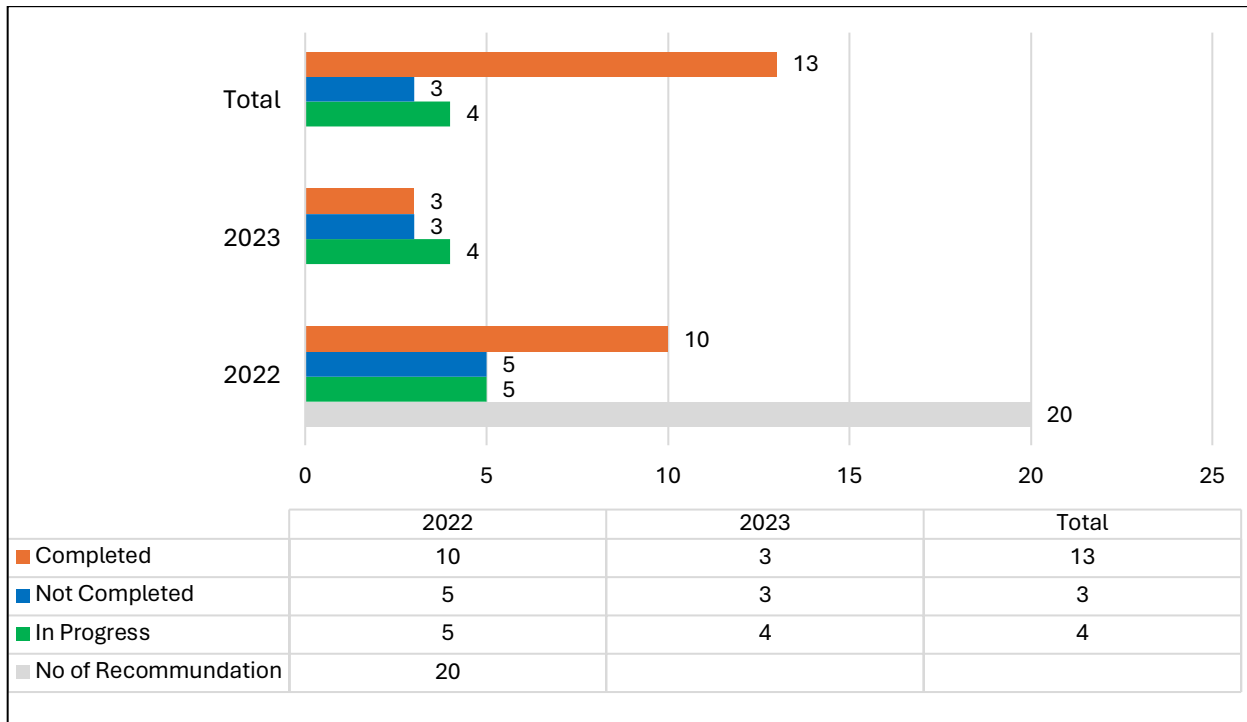


Figure 23: Implementation of Recommendations Related to the Ministry of Education

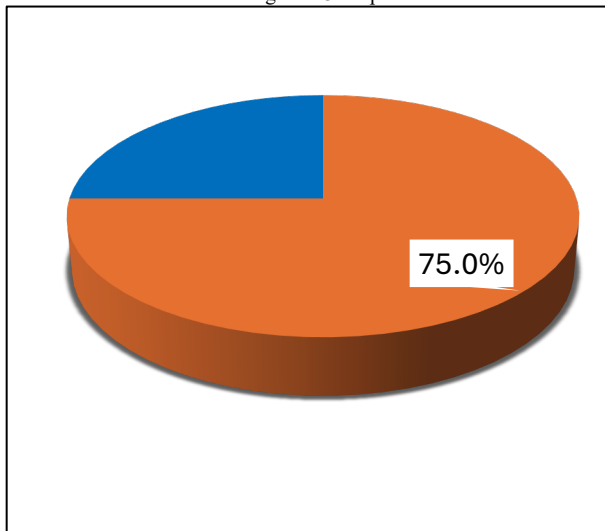


Figure-24 Rates of recommendation execution for 2022-2023

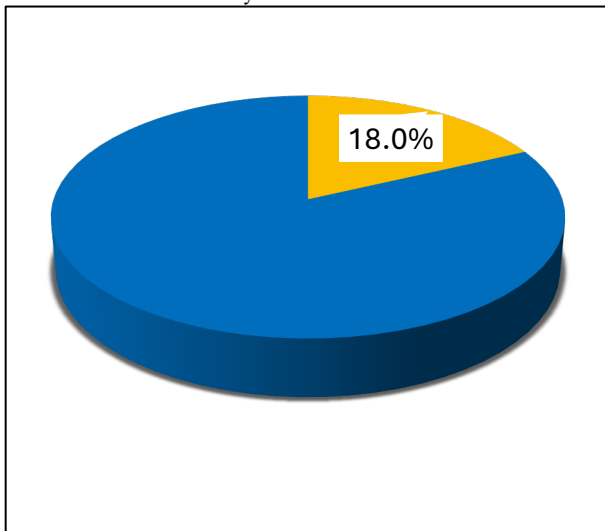


Figure-25 Effort rate of the ministry to completed the recommendations

Implemented Recommendations

1. Foster a culture of inclusivity, mutual respect, and tolerance, echoing the values of citizenship and embracing diversity. Enhance governmental initiatives in collaboration with civil society entities to instill a culture of human rights through educational initiatives. These endeavors should be undertaken in partnership with national institutions and civil society bodies.
2. Embed human rights education within academic curricula at both school and university levels, and steadfastly uphold their integration, encompassing teachings on gender parity and the rights of children.
3. Ensure universal access to essential services, such as education, for all constituents of the region. Sustain endeavors to provide educational opportunities for children, particularly those residing in rural areas.
4. Enhance the educational framework by augmenting the budget allocated to the education sector, thereby ensuring that the educational system mirrors the cultural ethos of all communities.
5. Mitigate the prevalence of child absenteeism from educational institutions and bolster attendance rates across all educational tiers.
6. Undertake requisite measures to guarantee educational access for marginalized demographics, including immigrants, refugees, and internally displaced populations, fostering inclusive educational prospects.
7. Promote educational accessibility for internally displaced persons (IDPs), facilitating their integration into formal educational settings.
8. Collate and analyze data pertaining to the education sector, disaggregated by gender, age, and geographical parameters, to effectively evaluate the efficacy of pertinent policies and initiatives.
9. Implement requisite measures to safeguard minors from violence and sexual exploitation, liberate all juveniles held captive by the terrorist organization ISIL, and facilitate their reunification with their families. Moreover, augment the allocation of personnel, ordnance, and financial assets towards alternative care facilities and associated child protection services to effectively rehabilitate entrusted minors and facilitate their reintegration into familial and societal frameworks.
10. Enhance endeavors aimed at enhancing the well-being of minors, particularly concerning access to education, healthcare, potable water, and shielding them from all forms of aggression.
11. Streamline the accessibility of educational infrastructure for children with disabilities, adequately equip educators to cater to their needs, and prioritize the provision of developmentally appropriate services tailored to children with disabilities, as outlined in Section 4 of Article 40 of the Figure er.
12. Appropriately allocate human, technological, and financial resources towards the rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities, along with the provision of mental health services, sanitation facilities, secure environments, education, and vocational training.

13. Promptly undertake measures to ensure that all children with disabilities enjoy unrestricted access to complimentary education.

Unmet Recommendations

1. Ensure that children with mental or intellectual disabilities fully enjoy their rights and combat the stigma and discrimination prevalent among those residing in regions affected by armed conflicts or rural locales, hindering their access to services and educational opportunities.
2. Facilitate support for stakeholders and experts, guiding them towards engaging in research endeavors.
3. Allocate requisite human, material, and financial resources for tailored assistance to children with disabilities, encompassing those with intellectual or psychosocial challenges, autism spectrum disorders, and visual or hearing impairments. Enable their access to inclusive and high-quality education, while dismantling all barriers, such as lengthy commutes, inadequate transportation, and shortages of educators trained in inclusive pedagogy, sign language, Braille, and simplified reading methods.

Recommendations undergoing implementation:

1. Incorporating considerations regarding the adverse effects of narcotics into educational curricula.
2. Sustain endeavors to foster job prospects for young individuals through vocational education and training initiatives.
3. Allocate human, technical, and financial assets toward the well-being of children, encompassing mental health services, sanitation, secure environments, educational provisions, and vocational development.
4. Heighten endeavors to ensure the enactment and enforcement of legislation pertaining to narcotics and psychotropic substances, while prioritizing the establishment of a center for addiction rehabilitation as mandated by law. Additionally, advocate for heightened awareness among adolescents through extensive school programs and media campaigns. Furthermore, recommended that the Member State facilitate access to drug addiction treatment services.

Below are the measures, laws, guidelines, procedures, and practical steps taken in implementing the international recommendations:

Ministry of Education Legislation

The Kurdistan Parliament enacted the Education Law No. (13) of 2022. Pursuant to this legislation, a total of (22) non-governmental educational centers were identified as non-compliant and were subjected to fines ranging from (10) million dinars to (70) million dinars. As outlined in the Ministry of Education and Education System Law of 2006, compulsory education extends up to the ninth grade. Furthermore, in accordance with a recent directive from the Ministry of Education, failure to enroll children in school may result in a penalty of (200,000) two hundred thousand dinars for parents.

Total number of students in public and private schools in the Kurdistan Region in the academic year 2023-2024:

Table 13 Number of students in the Kurdistan Region

Number of students in the Kurdistan Region	
Male Student	994034
Female Student	941984
Total	1936018

Number of first-grade students in public and private schools in the Kurdistan Region in the academic year 2023-2024:

Table 13 Number of students in the Kurdistan Region

Number of primary school students in the Kurdistan Region	
Male Student	82664
Female Student	77557
Total	160221

Enhance funding allocation towards the education sector.

The Ministry of Education has formally petitioned for a heightened allocation within its budgetary provisions to enhance the quality and efficacy of educational endeavors within our jurisdiction. This initiative aligns with the broader objectives outlined in the Kurdistan Regional Government's agenda pertaining to human rights, which, regrettably, have faced impediments due to fiscal constraints. Despite efforts to prioritize education, the scarcity of funds has posed challenges in realizing these aspirations. Consequently, in response to these exigencies, the Prime Minister has designated a dedicated fund of (20) billion Iraqi Dinars, supplemented by an annual allocation of (2) billion Iraqi Dinars, aimed specifically at fortifying the educational sector.

Promote an ethos of inclusivity and equity.

The principles of harmonious cohabitation and acceptance are evident within the educational framework. These fundamental concepts are integrated into the syllabi of early primary education in grades (1 to 9) of primary schools, spanning from the initial to secondary levels, and are further emphasized through literature focusing on interpersonal dynamics and ethical principles throughout the primary school journey. Furthermore, the discourse on human rights is deliberately incorporated into the academic curriculum during the 10th-grade curriculum of secondary education.

Study of structures

- In the Kurdistan Region, there are a total of (18) Turkmen schools and (49) Syriac schools.
- Within the educational framework of Duhok province, a dedicated committee is established to oversee the curriculum pertaining to the Yazidi faith. Since 1999, Yazidi students have been provided with comprehensive education in their respective locales from primary grades through secondary education.

Facilitate educational opportunities for children residing in rural locales.

Per the regulations outlined by the Ministry of Education, there exists an equitable treatment framework for educational institutions, wherein urban and rural schools are treated with parity. Consequently, the student populace in rural areas stands at approximately 362,295 individuals.

The entitlement of Gipsy (Karaj) residents to access educational opportunities.

Currently, there are (85) individuals who have successfully completed university studies, and a significant cohort of (1125) students actively pursuing higher education within the region.

Offer educational avenues for migrants, asylum-seekers, and internally displaced individuals.

Refugee learners have been enrolled in educational institutions within the Kurdistan Region. To facilitate this endeavor, 138 schools have been designated for internally displaced persons (IDPs), with an additional 54 schools allocated specifically for refugees in the Kurdistan Region. The current student populace comprises 40,410 refugee learners within camp settings, reflecting the Ministry of Education's commitment in 2021. Furthermore, the Ministry advocates for an inclusive approach by implementing a policy of integration, wherein every refugee learner possesses the prerogative to seek admission to any educational institution across the Kurdistan Region.

Offer complimentary educational opportunities

In the ninth cabinet of the Kurdistan Regional Government, the Back to Learning initiative has successfully reintegrated 20,000 street children into formal education, exemplifying the administration's commitment to inclusive educational access.

Creating job opportunities in the education sector in the Ministry of Education

Through law enforcement, the public education sector has been prevented from being neglected, while more job opportunities have been created in the ninth cabinet.

- A total of 155,904 educators and staff members have been designated within the Ministry of Education to cater to the needs of children, alongside over 30,000 lecturers.

- Within the non-governmental education sector, 16,349 individuals previously unemployed in educational roles have been afforded employment opportunities.
- The non-governmental education sector currently comprises 12,090 educators.
- Among these, 11,524 educators hold permanent positions, with 566 serving in governmental institutions.
- The non-governmental education sector also employs 4,259 staff members.
- Of these employees, 4,140 hold permanent positions and are self-sustaining.
- Furthermore, in accordance with legal provisions, 119 civil servants concurrently engage in roles within the non-governmental sector.

Table 15 Number of teachers and employees employed in private schools

Number of teachers employed in the private sector	12090
Number of employees employed in the private sector	4259
The total	16349

Monitoring the educational process

Monitoring of the educational process will persist throughout 2023-2024, emphasizing diligent oversight of the collective spectrum of non-governmental educational institutions. In pursuit of this objective, multiple esteemed committees have been convened to operate electronically via the E-Parwarda platform under the auspices of the Ministry of Education. Furthermore, an innovative protocol for tracking student attendance within five-year non-governmental institutions will be instituted, promoting enhanced accountability and efficacy.

Facilitate the provision of dedicated accommodations for children with disabilities, within educational institutions.

In relation to the accessibility of educational facilities for children with disabilities, the Ministry of Education endeavors to equip educators with the requisite skills to cater to their needs, whilst prioritizing the implementation of tailored child development services. This initiative seeks to seamlessly integrate students with disabilities into the educational framework.

Renovation and construction of educational facilities from 2019 to 2024:

- A total of 80 educational centers have been newly established.
- Approximately 1300 schools underwent renovation initiatives.
- The declaration was made for the establishment of 127 classrooms within schools across the Kurdistan Region.

- In 2024, following the recommendation of the Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Regional Government and in alignment with the ninth cabinet's dedicated focus on the education sector, the decision was made to prioritize the creation of numerous schools in Erbil province. This initiative, developed within the Ministry of Education's comprehensive plan for 2024, aims to ensure a conducive learning environment for students, particularly in underserved areas and communities.
- Commencing at a budget of \$12 million, initiatives include the construction of an educational hub, teacher training facility, and the renovation of 20 schools within the region.

Environmental consciousness in education

The Ministry of Education has produced a substantial quantity of (10,000) ten thousand environmental instructional manuals utilized by educators for their educational advantage, complemented by professional development seminars provided to teachers.

Collaboration with global stakeholders

Facilitate workshops and educational sessions in collaboration with the United Nations International Labor Organization (ILO) spanning from 2022 to early 2023, aimed at advancing children's rights through educational, artistic, and media initiatives. SCREAM trainings have meticulously examined the perils and circumstances associated with abuse, consequently refining the catalog of hazardous forms of child labor. In pursuit of this objective, 27 sessions of dialogue and exchange have been convened.

Deliver educational provisions tailored to individuals with disabilities.

- Establishments dedicated to serving individuals with disabilities are linked with the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, operating in tandem with the Ministry of Education to facilitate the integration of disabled students into mainstream educational institutions, including vocational high schools.
- At the recommendation of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, the Council of Ministers has sanctioned a reduction of working hours for educators and staff members with disabilities within the Ministry of Education by one hour.
- A notable achievement has been the successful reintegration of (14) children diagnosed with autism into conventional educational settings following their recovery.

Table 16 Statistics of students with disabilities

Disabled students in primary school	10466
Male	5828
Female	4,638
Reserved teachers for the disabled	84

Appropriate actions are to be undertaken to enact the directives set forth by the Ministry of Education.

Following an extensive series of workshops and roundtable discussions, the Office of the Coordinator for International Advocacy has formulated targeted strategies. These strategies have been communicated to pertinent stakeholders, including the Ministry of Education, under the auspices of the Prime Minister's Office. They are designed to align with international standards and are integral to the predetermined timeline outlined in the overarching plan.

Dedicated to preventing discrimination and hate speech

- Integrate the topic of (harmony and mutual respect) into educational frameworks to cultivate consciousness among individuals regarding the perils of prejudice.
- Prioritize the instruction of children and adolescents in the eradication of discrimination, recognizing its profound implications on their educational development and the promotion of harmonious cohabitation.

On the rights of the disabled and people with disabilities

- Enhance accessibility to educational institutions for children with disabilities, ensuring tailored support and fostering an inclusive learning environment.
- Develop comprehensive training initiatives aimed at equipping educators, administrators, and supervisors with the necessary competencies to effectively support and educate students with disabilities.
- Deploy instructional aides to provide targeted assistance to students enrolled in special education programs.
- Establish dedicated classrooms within educational institutions specifically designed to accommodate and cater to the unique needs of students on the autism spectrum.
- Institute and enforce a robust special education framework across all districts to ensure equitable access to educational opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

Ministry of Construction and Housing

Out of the (2) recommendations submitted to the Ministry of Reconstruction and Housing in 2022, (1) recommendations have been implemented, (1) recommendations have not been implemented and (1) recommendation was in the process of implementation. Compared to 2023, the number of implemented recommendations decreased to (1) recommendation, and the number of recommendations in the process of implementation (1) recommendations. In this regard the implementation rate becomes (75%).

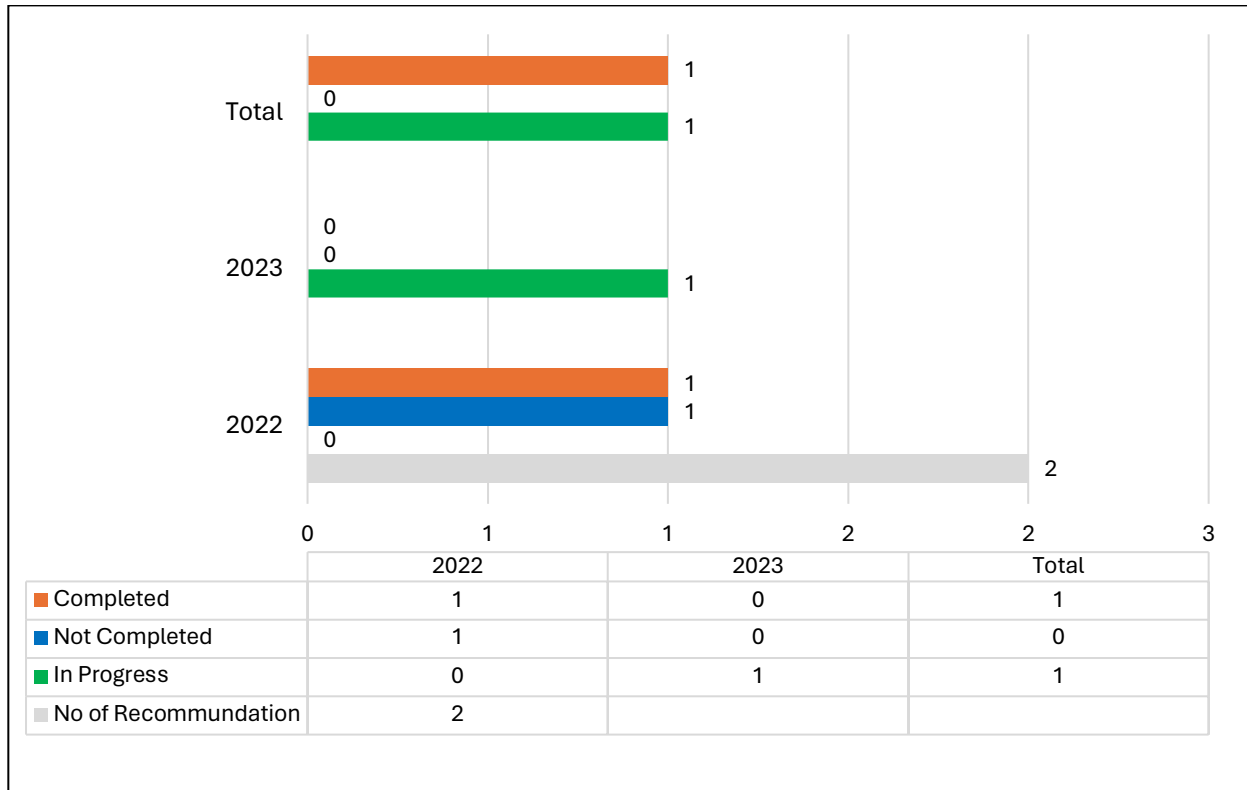


Figure 26: Implementation of Recommendations Related to the Ministry of Construction and Housing

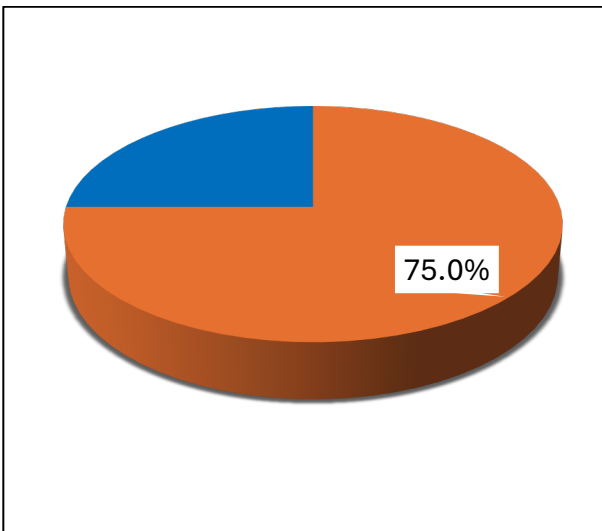


Figure-27 Rates of recommendation execution for 2022-2023

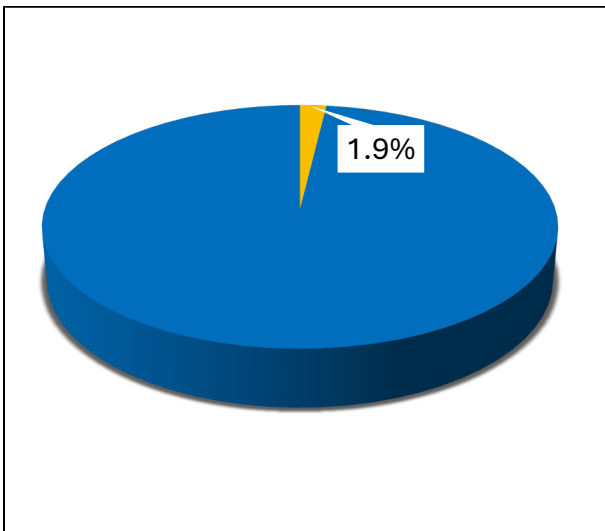


Figure-28 Effort rate of the ministry to completed the recommendations

Implemented Recommendations

1. Enhance economic and social development initiatives to elevate the overall quality of life for the population.

Unmet Recommendations

1. Foster collaboration with international and regional organizations dedicated to addressing the urgent needs of internally displaced persons (IDPs). Encourage civil society stakeholders to contribute financial support and resources for the reconstruction of areas liberated from terrorist groups, facilitating the voluntary repatriation of IDPs to their communities.

Below are the measures, laws, guidelines, procedures, and practical steps taken in implementing the international recommendations:

Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Reconstruction and Housing

- Execution of 43 Road Projects: With a budget allocation of 1,705,022,000,000 dinars for both new and proposed initiatives, we will construct 169.5 km of dual carriageways, 90 km of single carriageways, and undertake 116 km of road rehabilitation.
- Execution of 149 Road Projects: Allocating 919,533,000,000 dinars for new and proposed projects, we will facilitate the construction of 302 km of new roads and the rehabilitation of 1,195 km of existing roads, alongside the development of several bridge projects.
- Implementation of 17 Construction and Housing Projects: With a budget of 278,867,000,000 dinars for new and proposed projects, we aim to construct 3,000 housing units, including apartments and houses, for low-income citizens. Additionally, several new buildings will be constructed.
- Implementation of 11 Construction and Housing Projects: For the construction of 120 housing units for low-income citizens, we have allocated a budget of 1,200,000,000 dinars for new and proposed projects. Furthermore, we will complete the service works for 288 housing units with a budget of 1,400,000,000 dinars, and construct several additional buildings.
- Advancement of the Weigh Station System: We will enhance the existing weigh stations and construct 19 new ones, building on the 15 stations established in 2022.
- Expansion of the Weigh Station Network: By renovating existing facilities and establishing 20 new weigh stations in the provinces of Erbil, Sulaimani, and Duhok, we aim to improve infrastructure.
- Enhancement of Building Materials Laboratories: We will upgrade our laboratories by introducing new equipment, implementing advanced testing methods, and adhering to modern engineering standards.

Ensuring Project Quality

To maintain high standards in construction and road projects within the Kurdistan Region, the Ministry of Reconstruction and Housing conducts thorough inspections of all materials utilized. This oversight is crucial in guaranteeing the use of superior materials and the modern execution of projects, supported by advanced laboratory testing.

Economic and societal advancement and enhancement of citizens' quality of life

The Ministry of Reconstruction and Housing operates in accordance with the legislative framework stipulated in Law No. 7 of 2008, as subsequently amended by Law No. 16 of 2011, concerning the facilitation of housing access for low-income individuals within the Kurdistan Region.

During the tenure of the ninth cabinet of the Kurdistan Regional Government, significant strides have been made in infrastructure development, particularly in the realm of housing. A total of nine housing projects, amounting to a budget of 98.592 billion Iraqi dinars, have been successfully executed in the Sitak and Zrgwez regions. These endeavors include the provision of essential amenities such as water and sewage systems, alongside the construction of local thoroughfares catering to 372 housing units.

Furthermore, the investment budget has allocated resources for an additional 42 housing projects across various regions within the Kurdistan Region, totaling an expenditure of 368.142 billion Iraqi dinars. These initiatives encompass the construction of 3,044 housing units tailored for low-income demographics, complemented by essential infrastructure enhancements like water and sewage facilities, as well as the development of local thoroughfares servicing 4,336 housing units. Presently, some of these projects are on hold due to the completion of housing units outpacing the readiness of accompanying service infrastructure. Notwithstanding, the Ministry of Reconstruction and Housing remains steadfast in its commitment to surmounting these challenges and expediting the distribution of residences to underserved populations.

Between 2021 and 2023, the Ministry of Reconstruction and Housing has carried out several important and strategic projects as explained below:

Table 17 Number of projects by year

Road construction and repair projects			
Year	Project	Km	Iraqi Dinars
2021	75	232	532,334,134,000
2022	132	–	22,857,194,337
2023	131	462	16,611,603,780

Completed and ongoing road and housing projects:

Table 18 Number of completed and ongoing projects related to roads by year

Completed and ongoing projects roads and housing				
Year	Kind of Project	Number of Project	Km, Unit	Million Iraqi Dinars
2021	The road	75	232	220,862
	Dwell	–	–	
2022	The road	132	–	22,857,194,337
	Dwell	8	540 housing units with 1500 houses	98,268,000,0
2023	The road	204	–	1,528,744,000,000
	Dwell	42	–	352.736000,000

Facilitating Access to Housing Opportunities for Low-Income Individuals

In an effort to enhance accessibility to housing opportunities for low-income individuals, the Ministry has implemented measures to streamline the application process through an online platform (kamdaramet.com). This platform enables the submission and completion of application forms for over (9,000) housing units earmarked for distribution. In accordance with legal mandates, (3%) of these units are designated for individuals with disabilities who meet the eligibility criteria.

The activation of the online portal aligns with the provisions outlined in Law No. 16 of 2012, governing the allocation of housing units for low-income residents in the Kurdistan Region. Eligible citizens are encouraged to utilize this platform to submit their applications confidently.

To ensure inclusivity and accuracy in the application process, the form has been meticulously developed with insights and recommendations from the Kurdistan Tenants Association. These housing units are slated for construction across various urban and rural areas, subject to specific eligibility criteria and guidelines for prospective beneficiaries.

Following the registration phase, applications will undergo assessment based on the Housing Act, followed by thorough evaluation by dedicated committees within the Ministry of Reconstruction and Housing. Subsequently, recommendations will be forwarded to administrative entities within the Kurdistan Regional Government for further review. A specialized committee will oversee the allocation process, meticulously evaluating each housing unit's suitability within urban, district, and sub-district contexts. Upon approval, these units will be distributed equitably among eligible citizens.

While a portion of the housing units has reached completion, others are currently under construction, totaling (9,004) units. Distribution will occur through a structured 25-year installment plan, aimed at providing sustainable support to low-income individuals in need of housing assistance.

Provide communal amenities to villagers

The Ministry of Reconstruction and Housing extends communal amenities such as the construction and restoration of bridges and thoroughfares accessible to all strata of society, encompassing citizens and internally displaced persons. The Ministry remains steadfast in its dedication to revitalizing Kurdistan's rural settlements across all regions. Nonetheless, there are currently no significant endeavors or arrangements in place to collaborate with specialized international and regional entities in addressing the plight of internally displaced persons (IDPs) concerning the rehabilitation of areas liberated from extremist factions.

Under the auspices of the ninth cabinet of the Kurdistan Regional Government, a multitude of initiatives have been executed and finalized, notably encompassing the erection and refurbishment of bridges and roads, totaling (440) projects with an expenditure of (912,132,000,000) dinars. These endeavors are financed through allocations from the investment, regular, and 30% of revenues from truck towing stations budgets, disbursed across the provinces and autonomous administrations within the Kurdistan Region.

The Ministry of Reconstruction and Housing bears the mantle of strategizing, overseeing, and executing public thoroughfare infrastructure schemes adhering to international benchmarks. These initiatives encompass the development of primary and secondary roads, rural pathways, tunnels, bridges, road maintenance, and load regulation at weigh stations to ensure traffic safety for the populace of the Kurdistan Region.

Presently, numerous ongoing ventures have encountered impediments due to the precarious financial landscape in the Kurdistan Region and the dearth of budgetary allocations to bring them to fruition. Nevertheless, concerted efforts are underway to surmount these hurdles promptly to ensure the entire spectrum of society can reap the benefits of these amenities.

Facilitating Technical and Engineering Training Initiatives

Under the aegis of the ninth cabinet of the Kurdistan Regional Government, an array of conferences, workshops, courses, and diverse technical and engineering training sessions have been convened to augment the scholarly acumen of Ministry personnel and engineers in service implementation.

Throughout the tenure of the ninth cabinet of the Kurdistan Regional Government, (14) seminars and workshops, comprising (21) distinct courses, were conducted, with (1197) employees deriving tangible benefits from these endeavors.

Environmental Conservation Endeavors

In the year 2023, the inauguration of a bitumen recycling facility in Erbil, boasting a daily processing capacity of 200 tons, heralded a significant milestone.

The operationalization of this facility holds profound significance as it represents Iraq and the Middle East's inaugural enterprise of its kind. By repurposing asphalt retrieved from thoroughfares for the construction of new roads, the facility not only mitigates environmental degradation but also effectuates a 25% reduction in costs.

Coordination with the federal government

In terms of collaboration with the federal government, there has been a lack of support extended towards the implementation and development of projects, particularly within the realm of housing initiatives.

International assistance for financial and logistical support

Regarding the collaboration with donor nations in developmental endeavors alongside the Kurdistan Regional Government institutions, there has been a notable absence of financial and logistical aid towards the realization of housing and infrastructure projects, which are pivotal for sustained developmental progress.

Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism

Out of the (8) recommendations submitted to the Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism in 2022, (3) recommendations have been implemented, (4) recommendations have not been implemented and (1) recommendation was in the process of implementation. Compared to 2023, the number of implemented recommendations decreased to (3) recommendations the number of recommendations not implemented decreased to (2) recommendations, and the number of recommendations in the process of implementation reached (3) recommendations. In this regard the implementation rate becomes (56.3%).

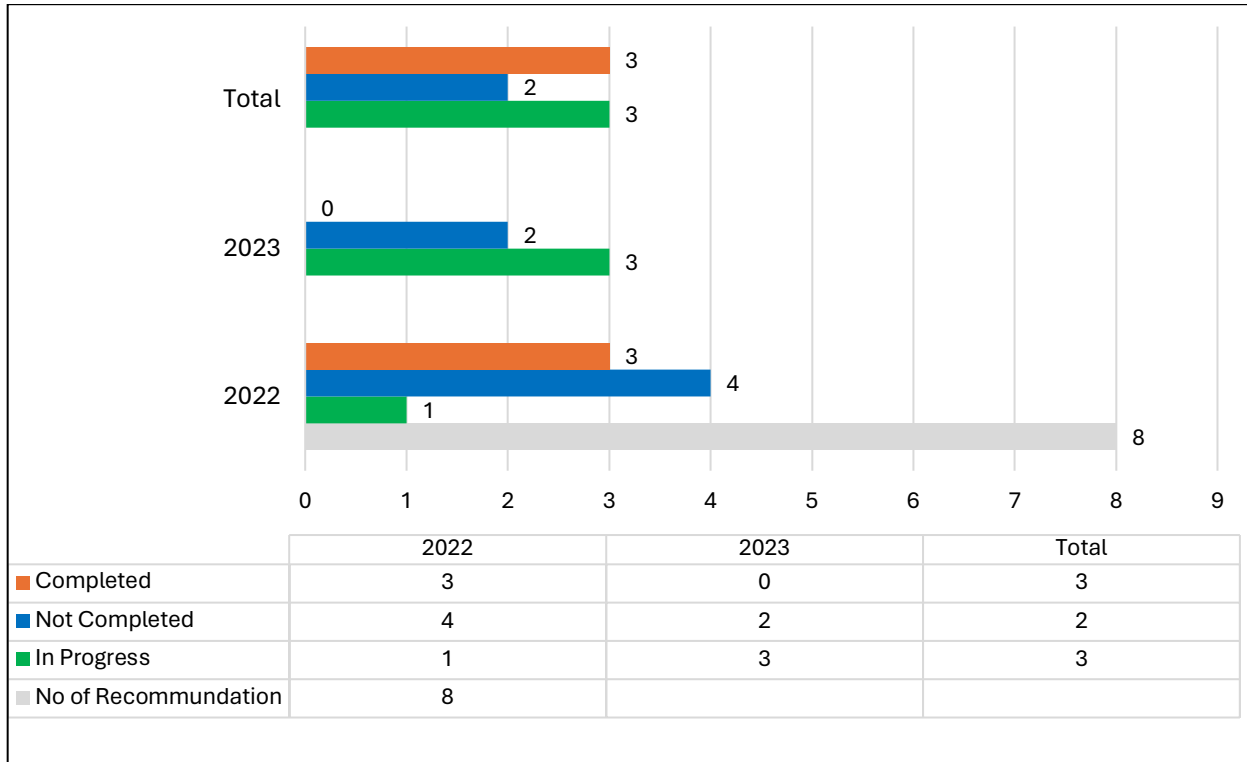


Figure 29: Implementation of Recommendations Related to the Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism

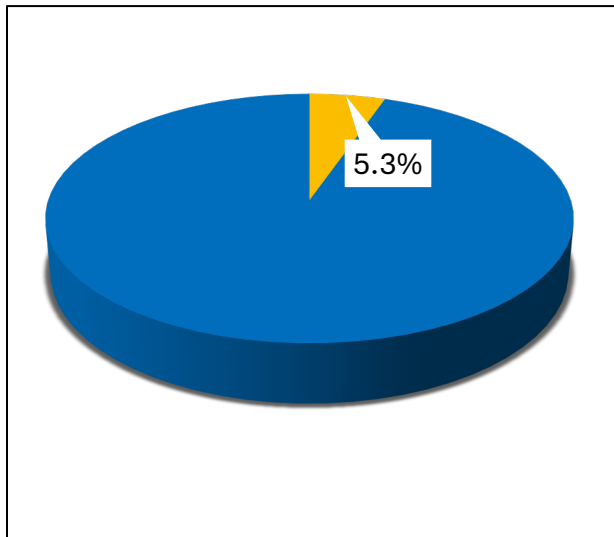


Figure-30 Rates of recommendation execution for 2022-2023

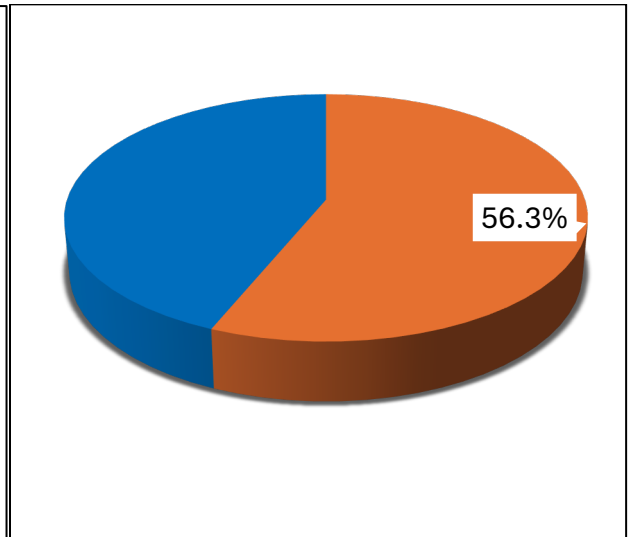


Figure-31 Effort rate of the ministry to completed the recommendations

Implemented Recommendations

1. Safeguard cultural heritage sites and halt the desecration of archaeological sites of cultural significance.
2. Enhance endeavors to safeguard cultural heritage sites.
3. Guarantee comprehensive assistance for displaced individuals in regions under the influence of ISIS, encompassing the provision of potable water, sanitation facilities, sustenance, and medical aid within refugee settlements.

Unfulfilled Recommendations

1. Establish an enabling environment conducive to accommodating individuals with disabilities, ensuring smooth mobility and accessibility.
2. Formulate a comprehensive strategy aimed at furnishing direct support measures, mobile applications, proficient sign language interpreters, and other resources to enhance accessibility to buildings, amenities, public transportation nodes, and information and communication technology services.

Recommendations undergoing implementation:

1. Ensuring the safeguarding of the religious, cultural, and material heritage of the Yazidi community.
2. Coordinating cultural initiatives and outreach programs to enhance awareness of cultural diversity comprehensively.
3. Appropriating requisite human, material, and financial assets for the rehabilitation efforts, encompassing mental health provisions, sanitation services, secure accommodations, educational support, and vocational training.

Below are the measures, laws, guidelines, procedures, and practical steps taken in implementing the international recommendations:

Safeguarding the religious, cultural, and material heritage of the Yazidi community.

The Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism, operating via the General Directorate of Archaeology and Cultural Preservation alongside municipal and town directorates, assumes a pivotal role in preserving archaeological and cultural assets from decline and devastation. Its mandate encompasses rigorous scientific inquiry and comprehensive surveying of Kurdistan's historical landmarks, their meticulous documentation, and subsequent restoration endeavors, including (edifices, towers, bridges), and more. Furthermore, it endeavors to optimize the utilization of these landmarks across scientific, economic, and tourism sectors, adhering strictly to relevant standards and guidelines.

The General Directorate of Archaeology diligently endeavors to safeguard the cultural heritage sites within the Kurdistan Region, in strict adherence to the pertinent Archaeological Legislation. This commitment entails a comprehensive array of activities such as excavation, reconnaissance, preservation efforts, public outreach initiatives aimed at fostering archaeological consciousness, organization of scholarly symposia, and workshops, as well as vigilant surveillance and oversight of archaeological locales.

The activities in the field of archeology and culture are as follows:

Table 19 Number of archaeological and cultural activities

Work and activities of	Number
Conducting archaeological projects (preservation, restoration)	22
Issuance of permits and archaeological inspections for projects	1047
Archaeological Survey	12
Lawsuits and follow-ups in the courts	43
Excavation	36
Exploring archaeological sites	131
Excessive monumentality	22
Conferences, interviews, and press releases	183
Participate in trainings, seminars, and conferences	37
Archaeological Awareness Course	46
People visiting museums	24367
Visits to two archaeological libraries	171

In light of prevailing financial challenges and the absence of dedicated funding for archaeological endeavors, the Kurdistan Regional Government has opted to allocate 900 million dinars towards the enhancement and preservation of cultural heritage sites. Acknowledging the pressing need to address the deteriorating state of buildings and historical monuments, concerted efforts have been made in collaboration with esteemed International Archaeological Institutes and academic institutions. Approximately 40% of the Kurdistan Region has undergone meticulous surveying, resulting in the documentation of over 3200 archaeological sites. Moreover, 41 strategic initiatives have been undertaken to safeguard and enhance these invaluable historical landmarks.

Cultural Heritage Restoration:

In light of the intensified initiatives aimed at safeguarding cultural heritage, it is noteworthy that in 2022, approximately (23) cultural sites underwent restoration under the auspices of the Kurdistan Regional Government's designated funds, while an additional (19) locations received restoration support from foreign entities, alongside contributions from local individuals and organizations.

In the year 2023, a commendable endeavor ensued, resulting in the meticulous restoration and excavation of 69 esteemed archaeological sites. Additionally, a diligent monitoring initiative was implemented to safeguard the integrity of 131 such sites. Regrettably, amidst the ongoing conflict between the Turkish army and the PKK, 79 cherished monuments within the Duhok province met with destruction.

Projects undertaken in 2023:

Table 20 Number of projects related to the restoration of monuments and culture.

Project name	Project location	Amount paid	The cooperating party
Renovation of King Mahmoud Headquarters	Sulaimani	32355000	The CDO Organization
The door of Amedi	Amedi	500,000 \$	Columbia University
Glass knife		500,000 \$	Czech GimaArt Company US Consulate
Kufri Castle	Kufri	300,000 \$	Government budget
Renovation of Kembalan Palace	Duhok	63849700	
Karaoglan	Sulaimani	40500000	
Renovation of the Companions Mosque	Akre	4000000	
Archaeological excavations	Akre	7780000	
Construction of fence for Shindokhan Hill	Duhok	26400000	
Renovation of the wall of Zakho Castle	Zakho	6000000	
Restoration and repair of Shanadar Cave	Mergasur	67990000	
Renovation of part of Hami Rwanduz	Rwanduz	66255000	
Fence the monument of Aj Qala	Rwanduz	8500000	
Renovation of Erbil Museum	Erbil	103775000	
Banaman Castle	Erbil	49265000	

Renovation of the palace of the shrine of Bapir Faqe	Koya	9150000	
Fencing the old castle	Koya	1500000	
Documentation of cultural houses in Koya	Koya	29500000	
Renovation of the historical palace of Dili	Duhok	23275000	
Archaeological excavations in Asia	Duhok	6911300	
Compensation for the purchase of archaeological pieces for the museum	Sulaimani	142790000	
Supporting wall for Koya Castle	Koya	76500000	
Renovation of Koya Mullah Cultural House	Koya	164570000	
The total			1,300,000 dollars

Punishment for Offenders

During the fiscal year of 2023, legal actions were pursued against individuals found to have trespassed, vandalized, or engaged in illicit commerce within archaeological sites, resulting in punitive measures being enacted. A total of 43 lawsuits were initiated against violators. Furthermore, it was observed that 99 archaeological sites across the Kurdistan Region had been subjected to encroachment.

In regard to the oversight and enforcement of regulations pertaining to archaeological sites in 2022, a total of 111 sites have been subject to encroachment. Conversely, security agencies have apprehended numerous individuals involved in the illicit trade of relics. Additionally, 1563 individuals were subjected to scrutiny prior to commencing work on archaeological sites. Moreover, 215 sites deemed at risk underwent thorough investigations, followed by the implementation of necessary remedial actions. Furthermore, 33 formal requests were made in 2022 to initiate legal proceedings against encroachers of archaeological sites. Presently, these legal actions are underway, with two cases having reached final adjudication.

In 2023, formal commitments were secured from 121 individuals pledging to uphold the integrity of the monuments. In order to safeguard the monuments throughout Project 1041, authorizations have been granted to citizens and businesses following thorough assessments to guarantee the preservation of these historical sites.

Protecting the rights of people with disabilities.

Safeguarding the rights of individuals with disabilities is of paramount importance to the Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism, reflecting a dedicated commitment to inclusivity and accessibility. Pursuant to this objective, significant endeavors have been undertaken in this domain, with the ensuing elucidation of key initiatives as follows:

- In 2022, in a collaborative effort with the Ministry of Planning and in conjunction with representatives from the Coordination and Monitoring Office, the Ministry of Reconstruction and Housing, and the Investment Board, several regulatory frameworks were devised. Among these, the (Accessibility Code) stands prominent, meticulously crafted to ensure inclusivity and compliance with standards. Delivered to the Prime Minister's Office via written correspondence numbered 1832 on 28/6/2022 by the Ministry of Planning, it encapsulates thorough considerations and warrants adherence to protocols safeguarding the rights of persons with disabilities during the issuance of building permits and project executions.
- In 2023, the Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism promulgated a directive subsequent to the enactment of the Accessibility Code, delineated by correspondence bearing number 3723 dated 28/3/2023, duly ratified by the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. This directive aims to address pertinent issues comprehensively, encompassing all feedback. Henceforth, in the issuance of building permits and execution of projects, strict adherence to the code ensuring accessibility rights for individuals with disabilities is imperative.
- Guidelines for promoting prosperity have been universally applied to urban development, encompassing the construction of projects, streets, and buildings with due consideration to the requirements of individuals with disabilities.
- Allocation of suitable land in designated areas for the establishment of specialized institutions and centers catering to these demographic groups is promptly facilitated upon request.
- Allocation and development of land for members of the (Zhin) Association and affiliated organizations, designating the area as the (Zhin) neighborhood, along with the provision of essential municipal services such as sewage, water supply, road infrastructure, and electricity.
- Ministerial Decree No. (207) dated 25/4/2023 outlines various provisions concerning urban planning, notably emphasizing in paragraphs (9 and 10) the importance of ensuring safe access to buildings and accommodating the needs of individuals with disabilities.
- The Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism, in correspondence, referenced as No. (13343) dated 16/10/2023, has issued directives to all affiliated departments and general directorates under its purview. These directives pertain to the imperative of unification and the safeguarding of the rights of individuals with disabilities, particularly victims of landmines, with a specific focus on the Kurdistan Region. It is emphasized that such individuals must be encompassed within the ambit of the National Disability Plan (2024-2027) for mine-related affairs in Iraq. This inclusion is underscored as the sixth focal objective of the plan, aimed at fostering the development of cities and residential communities conducive to the needs of persons with disabilities. As part of this initiative, within the scope of the plan's mandate to construct 2,000 housing units for low-income demographics, dedicated zones must be conscientiously considered to adequately cater to the requirements of these marginalized groups.

Preparation of Archaeological Master Plan

The General Directorate of Development Planning within the Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism has meticulously crafted and executed comprehensive master plans for the urban centers and municipalities of the Kurdistan Region. The primary focus of these endeavors is to systematically structure urban landscapes and allocate land resources judiciously. This includes delineating diverse zones encompassing (residential areas, commercial areas, industrial areas, tourist areas, green areas, etc.). These delineations are instrumental in formulating a coherent vision for sustained urban development across extended, intermediate, and immediate time horizons.

Visitors to the Kurdistan Region

The agenda of the Tourism Board is committed to honoring the visitors who journey to the Kurdistan Region. In 2022, the Tourism Legislation in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq was enacted as Law No. (9) of 2022, delineating the responsibilities and entitlements of all stakeholders.

In 2021, the Kurdistan Region received a substantial influx of visitors, totaling over (4,189,000) individuals. Notably, (85%) hailed from central and southern Iraq, while (15%) comprised international travelers. Subsequent to this, in 2022, the Kurdistan Region experienced a further surge in tourism, hosting in excess of six million guests.

Tourism data as of the end of October:

The aggregate count of visitors to the Kurdistan Region in 2023 at both border crossings and airports, up until the termination of October, amounted to (7431597) tourists as documented in the ensuing table:

Table 21 Number of tourists in

Place	Number of tourists
Erbil	2284610
Sulaimani	2028898
Duhok	1307551
Garmian	366578
Halabja	360,000
Soran	195972
Zakho	803838
Raperin	84150
The total	7431597

Offer direct supportive methodologies and mobile applications

The General Board of Tourism had implemented an application furnishing comprehensive amenities to tourists in the capacity of an electronic tourist guide. Regrettably, owing to the prevailing financial exigency, the application has been rendered inactive.

Collaboration with international organizations

- Over the period spanning from 2019 to 2023, in collaboration with the esteemed Dutch organization, (VNG), and operating within the auspices of the (LOGOREP) initiative, comprehensive development strategies were meticulously crafted for five municipalities. The overarching aim was to fortify local governance structures, particularly in areas accommodating displaced populations, thereby fostering enhanced socio-economic resilience. Notably, these initiatives were directed towards municipalities encompassing (Qushtapa, Kurgosk, Basrma, Sibiran, and Kani Qarzala), with a keen focus on facilitating job creation opportunities for refugees and internally displaced individuals.
- With the support of the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA), efforts are underway to revise the comprehensive framework of Erbil's master plan. This endeavor, initially projected to span a duration of (two and a half years), remains ongoing.
- Presently, we are in the preparatory phase in collaboration with the Dutch Association of Municipalities (VNG) to initiate the formulation of a comprehensive master plan for Halabja. Given the historical challenges faced by the city, this initiative holds a prominent position on our priority list. Concurrently, plans are underway to craft a development strategy for Soran, an area that has recently transitioned into an independent administrative entity.
- The General Directorate of Development Planning is currently engaged in constructive dialogues with VNG and UNHCR aimed at formulating strategic frameworks for the effective execution of the initiatives delineated within the urban development plan for (Qushtapa, Kurgosk, Basrma, Sibiran, and Kani Qarzala). These discussions encompass multifaceted dimensions such as (Infrastructure, Educational Services, Healthcare, Tourism, as well as Industrial and Commercial sectors).
- In the realm of architectural heritage preservation, UNESCO has fostered partnerships with academic institutions and archaeological organizations. Throughout the year 2023, in collaboration with 36 international universities, endeavors including excavations, surveys, and capacity-building initiatives for personnel have been undertaken, underscoring a commitment to shared cultural stewardship.
- On June 21st, 2023, the General Directorate of Planning, in collaboration with the Dutch organization (VNG), orchestrated an investment exposition designed to allure potential investors for the execution of proposed projects outlined in the development plan for the specified quintet of municipalities.
- A comprehensive strategy for the overhaul of the tourism sector in the Kurdistan Region has been meticulously crafted under the auspices of the UNDP, with financial backing provided by USAID.

- Diligent efforts have been directed towards the advancement of agricultural tourism, with invaluable support from GIZ.
- Numerous initiatives have been undertaken in partnership with the esteemed Italian UPP, contributing significantly to various projects.

Efforts to address the land matter concerning the Christian community in Ankawa township and the compensation related to land acquisition for Erbil International Airport:

- In Ankawa township, parcels of land will be exclusively designated under the auspices of Christian communities. This measure is implemented to uphold the demographic integrity of the locality, which predominantly consists of Christian inhabitants. This approach aligns with the provisions delineated in Law No. (5) of 2015.
- Lands situated within the precincts of (Gardjutyar) encompassing Erbil International Airport, have been duly compensated at a rate of (12%) and have undergone formal registration without encountering any substantive issues.
- However, lands positioned outside the confines of Erbil International Airport, specifically designated for logistical and airport security purposes, have yet to undergo compensation proceedings. To address this protracted matter, a specialized committee has been convened, presided over by the Minister of Transportation. The committee has diligently concluded its deliberations and has submitted a comprehensive report to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers for their conclusive decision.
- Additionally, another committee, under the stewardship of the Governor of Erbil, has been constituted with the identical objective of resolving this lingering issue.
- Pertaining to a directive issued by the Prime Minister on 27/3/2022, an augmentation to the Committee to Resolve the Land Issue of the Ministry of Christians has been made, incorporating the Coordinator of International Advocacy. This strategic addition bolsters the efficacy of the existing committee, fortifying its mandate to address pertinent concerns effectively.

Christian land issues in the Akre and Amedi districts

- In (Hazar Jut) village within the Akre district, following the emergence of challenges due to the presence of ISIS and subsequent displacement of individuals, a decision was made to construct residences for Christian refugees. With the aid of an international organization, a contractor was engaged in this endeavor. Each dwelling was allocated \$3,000 in funding. However, it has come to light that the contractor has absconded, leaving unfinished projects. Concerned citizens have voiced their grievances, emphasizing the necessity for the Kurdistan Regional Government to bolster regulatory measures concerning investors.
- Notwithstanding the absence of prevalent communal discord in Bardarash, it is noteworthy that Yazidis residing in this locale are subject to the stipulations outlined in Article 140, akin to other regions.

- Within the Amedi district, there has been a proposal to expand municipal boundaries. Residents in the vicinity have expressed apprehension regarding the inclusion of their lands within this expansion. Consequently, they advocate for the exclusion of their territories from the revised municipal boundaries.

In accordance with Law No. (3) of 2019, specifically Article (9) pertaining to the registration of surplus land and communities, attention is drawn to the delineation concerning community-owned lands. Provisions therein expressly prohibit the registration of such lands under individual ownership and nationalities. Regrettably, instances of encroachment by unauthorized parties have been reported, resulting in undue exploitation of the aforementioned legislation.

Guidelines pertaining to the entitlements of individuals with disabilities:

The Ministry of Municipalities has formally addressed the protocols concerning individuals with disabilities via written correspondence No. (41) dated 3/1/2024. This communication delineates the rights of individuals with disabilities pertaining to architectural considerations, as outlined in the comprehensive report detailing the implementation of foreign construction oversight mechanisms within the Kurdistan Region. Notably, this report encompasses six distinct edifices and has been endorsed for widespread adoption.

Furthermore, within the annexes delineating Fire Safety Regulations, meticulous attention has been accorded to accommodating individuals with disabilities. This encompasses adherence to Electrical and Mechanical Traction Safety Regulations, Structural Integrity Guidelines, as well as Access and Mobility Standards, ensuring inclusivity across all facets of safety protocol.

Protocols essential for executing the directives outlined by the Ministry of Municipalities.

Following a comprehensive series of workshops and consultations, the Office of the Coordinator for International Guidelines has devised specific protocols. These protocols have been formally communicated to pertinent stakeholders through the auspices of the Office of the Prime Minister. They encompass municipal and tourism entities, aligning with internationally recognized standards within the stipulated timeframe prescribed by the overarching strategic plan.

Regarding the rights of individuals with disabilities:

- Foster an enabling environment conducive to the mobility of individuals with disabilities through the enactment of legislation, enhancement of infrastructure, and retrofitting of edifices.
- Implement the placement of signage designating spaces for parking designated for individuals with disabilities, those of reduced stature, and those facing physical handicaps within urban thoroughfares and market areas.

Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

Out of the (11) recommendations submitted to the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in 2022, (4) recommendations have been implemented, (3) recommendations have not been implemented and (4) recommendations were in the process of implementation. Compared to 2023, the number of implemented recommendations has decreased to (4) recommendations, the number of recommendations that have not been implemented has decreased to (2) recommendations, and the number of recommendations that were in the process of implementation has decreased to (5) recommendations. In this regard the implementation rate becomes (59.1%).

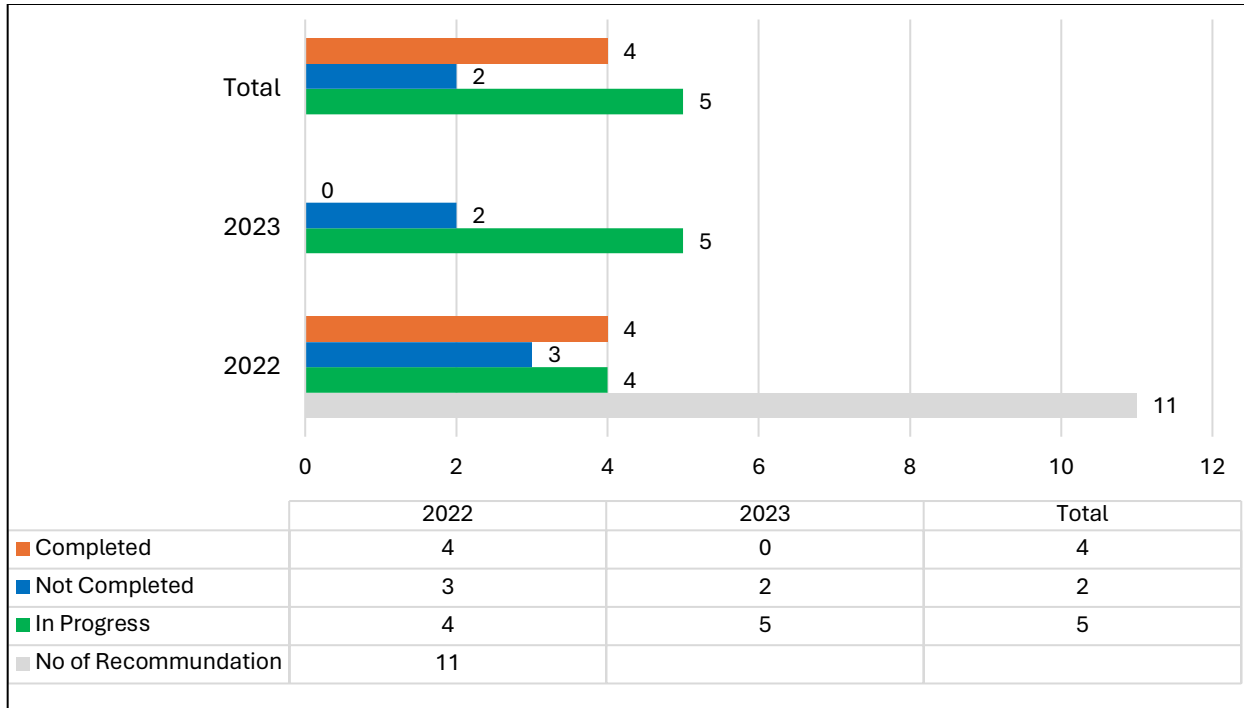


Figure 32: Implementation of Recommendations Related to the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research

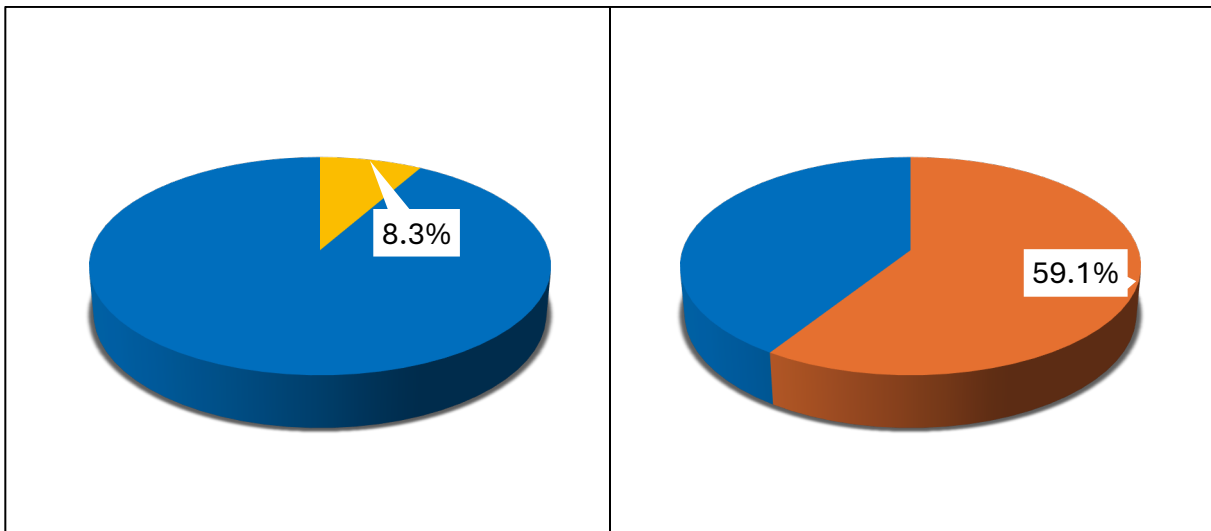


Figure-33 Rates of recommendation execution for 2022-2023

Figure-34 Effort rate of the ministry to completed the recommendations

Implemented Recommendations

1. Foster a culture of inclusivity, mutual respect, and diversity, in alignment with the ethos of citizenship and appreciation for pluralism. This can be achieved through the expansion of governmental initiatives and partnerships with civil society entities dedicated to promoting human rights awareness. These initiatives should be executed collaboratively with national institutions and civil society groups.
2. Enhance the propagation of an ethos of equality and nondiscrimination by amplifying governmental initiatives and fostering synergies with targeted civil society stakeholders.
3. Embed human rights instruction within educational curricula at both school and university levels, ensuring its ongoing integration, particularly in domains concerning gender equity and the rights of children.
4. Systematically gather and analyze data pertinent to the education sphere, stratified by gender, age, and geographical parameters, to gauge the efficacy of pertinent policies and initiatives.

Unmet Recommendations

1. Guarantee tuition-free higher education for all children with disabilities throughout their compulsory education journey, and enact policies promoting inclusive education to ensure their equitable participation in university programs.
2. Allocate essential human, material, and financial resources toward the rehabilitation and vocational education of individuals with disabilities, thereby fostering their integration and empowerment within the workforce.

Recommendations Under Consideration for Implementation:

1. The Committee advises the Member State to escalate endeavors aimed at enacting and enforcing legislation concerning drugs and psychotropic substances. Particular emphasis should be placed on establishing a rehabilitation center dedicated to addressing addiction in accordance with legal mandates. Additionally, it is recommended that targeted awareness campaigns, encompassing school-based initiatives and media outreach, be conducted, especially targeting adolescents. Furthermore, the Committee suggests that the Member States prioritize the provision of treatment for drug addiction and streamline its accessibility.
2. Sustain ongoing initiatives to foster employment opportunities for young individuals through vocational education and training programs.
3. Undertake requisite measures to ensure educational inclusivity for marginalized communities, including immigrants, refugees, and internally displaced persons.
4. Promptly institute measures to guarantee universal access to free education for all individuals with disabilities.
5. Enhance the education sector by augmenting the budget allocation, thereby fostering a culturally inclusive educational environment that reflects the diversity of all societal groups.

Below are the measures, laws, guidelines, procedures, and practical steps taken in implementing the international recommendations:

Numerous directives have been enacted to execute the suggestions, duly considering various parameters:

- Criteria for national ranking and university prerequisites.
- Consideration for the academic pursuits of Master's and PhD candidates.
- Alignment with the legislation governing private universities as sanctioned by the Kurdistan Parliament. Presently, (17) universities and university extensions have been established across Kurdistan's urban centers.

Strategic planning:

Emphasis will be placed on enhancing the breadth of technical and vocational education within the Kurdistan Region, alongside the development of examination protocols, establishment of student advisory services, formulation of ministerial directives, and advocacy for universities to undertake labor market assessments to align with educational curricula.

The focal points of the Ministry's strategic agenda will encompass the advancement of technical and vocational education, alongside the ongoing reform in higher education. Additionally, it will emphasize the alignment of educational curricula with the exigencies of the labor market, formulation of admission protocols, administration of examinations, the establishment of student advisory centers for technical and vocational education and training (TVET), legal frameworks, integration of the Kurdish language, and other pertinent subjects.

Enhance the expansion of both public and private educational institutions:

- The Kurdistan Region boasts 20 public universities, each overseen by respective governmental bodies specialized in their domain.
- Embracing the legislation governing private universities and adhering to regulatory frameworks for institute establishment, a total of twelve institutes have been established across various urban and rural areas of the Kurdistan Region, catering to diverse academic disciplines aligned with the demands of the labor market.

Reduced tuition fees

In light of the economic circumstances faced by individuals residing in the Kurdistan Region as a whole, and with the aim of expanding educational access for students, the Ministry has undertaken measures during the academic years (2019-2020), (2020-2021), and (2021-2022) to address this matter, including:

- Lower the tuition charges for supplementary and nocturnal educational programs by 65% across all state-funded tertiary institutions, encompassing all academic tiers (Diploma, Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctorate). This measure shall be enacted exclusively for the academic term spanning 2023-2024.
- To uphold the ethos of scholarly rivalry within educational establishments and mindful of citizens' circumstances, the Ministry has resolved to decrease tuition fees within private universities and colleges by a margin ranging from 10% to 20% across all educational levels in Kurdistan.

Initiatives to Enact the Reform Legislation Regarding Remuneration, Benefits, Endowments, Entitlements, and Retirements in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq

In accordance with the directives and guidance of the ninth cabinet of the Kurdistan Regional Government, the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research has undertaken the following measures subsequent to the enactment of the reform legislation concerning remuneration, benefits, endowments, entitlements, and retirements in the Kurdistan Region:

Table 22 Tracking Numbers Case Numbers

No. The cases	No. The audited file	No. additional rank	No. Salary increase	Difference in total salary	Note:
31332	25375	299	164	103,396,780	Done

Efforts to address substance abuse and psychotropic substances within universities and colleges:

- The Ministry of Higher Education has initiated the establishment of student counseling centers within universities, aimed at addressing substance abuse through awareness campaigns, skill enhancement programs, research initiatives, curriculum integration, strategic utilization of media platforms, including social media, and leveraging technological advancements.
- A convened session on February 26, 2024, was dedicated to delineating a comprehensive strategy for combating substance abuse and psychotropic substances. The responsibility for the execution of this strategy rests with the universities, underscoring their pivotal role in this endeavor.
- The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research is committed to tackling this issue through a multidisciplinary approach, drawing upon expertise from various fields such as psychology, sociology, law, media studies, medicine, and other relevant disciplines. Collaborative efforts among these diverse disciplines at the university level are integral to fostering effective interventions.

Elimination of gender discrimination

The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research has prioritized the refinement of curricula to enhance inclusivity, particularly within educational, humanities, and legal faculties. For instance, courses such as (Diversity Education) are increasingly prevalent across universities in the Kurdistan Region. These initiatives aim to foster a culture of coexistence and reverence for diversity, thereby ensuring that the educational landscape mirrors the rich tapestry of our communities. Furthermore, the admission process for Turkish and Syriac language departments within Kurdistan Regional Government universities will be merit-blind, emphasizing inclusivity and accessibility.

Efforts are underway to fortify gender equality initiatives within universities, including the establishment and bolstering of gender and equality centers. These centers play a pivotal role in addressing pertinent human rights issues and fostering harmonious relations amidst diversity. Human rights education, encompassing gender equality and children's rights, is seamlessly integrated into both school and university curricula. Concurrently, endeavors are ongoing to facilitate the integration of youth into the workforce through vocational education and training, thereby perpetuating a cycle of inclusive development.

Considering individuals with disabilities

Initiatives have been undertaken to offer complimentary educational and vocational instruction to individuals with disabilities, mitigate impediments, and earmark a portion of specialized educational offerings within both public and private university curricula. As part of this endeavor, the Kurdistan Regional University pledges to admit 100% of qualified candidates with disabilities, including those who are blind, into higher education, master's, and doctoral programs, contingent upon their successful completion of academic proficiency assessments. To date, (6) visually impaired individuals have availed themselves of these opportunities.

Admission of displaced persons to institutions of higher education in the region

Displaced individuals are enrolled in both public and private institutions of higher learning within the Kurdistan Region, receiving essential amenities including housing, sanitation, and conducive study environments.

Furthermore, facilitation has been extended to students originating from Kirkuk and surrounding separatist territories beyond the jurisdiction of the Kurdistan Regional Government, particularly those attending Kurdish educational institutions. During the academic year of 2021-2022, the enrollment process was streamlined for over (1160) such students.

Committed to mitigating discrimination and promoting inclusive dialogue:

- Committed to the rigorous pursuit of academic and scientific inquiry concerning the principles of coexistence, with a focus on eradicating discriminatory and inflammatory rhetoric within the research institutions of both public and private universities.

Specific to drugs and psychotropic substances

- Provide essential directives to streamline scientific inquiry and promote research endeavors concerning drugs and psychotropic substances.
- Offer support to relevant stakeholders and subject matter experts, guiding them in their pursuit of research initiatives within this domain.
- Incorporate the examination of the psychological effects of substances into the academic programs of medical, pharmaceutical, and sociological departments.
- Advocate for increased educational outreach within educational institutions at all levels, with a particular emphasis on integrating this topic into the curriculum, notably within legal studies.
- Establish specialized academic units within universities and colleges, specifically dedicated to the study of psychiatry and substance abuse.

Regarding the rights of individuals with disabilities:

Implement scholarships to ensure that all individuals with disabilities have access to complimentary education throughout all levels of university and advanced education.

Ministry of Planning

Out of the (14) recommendations submitted to the Ministry of Planning in 2022, (2) recommendations have been implemented, (7) recommendations have not been implemented and (5) recommendations were in the process of implementation. Compared to 2023, the number of implemented recommendations has increased to (3) recommendations, and the recommendations in the process of implementation also reached (11) recommendations. In this regard the implementation rate becomes (60.7%).

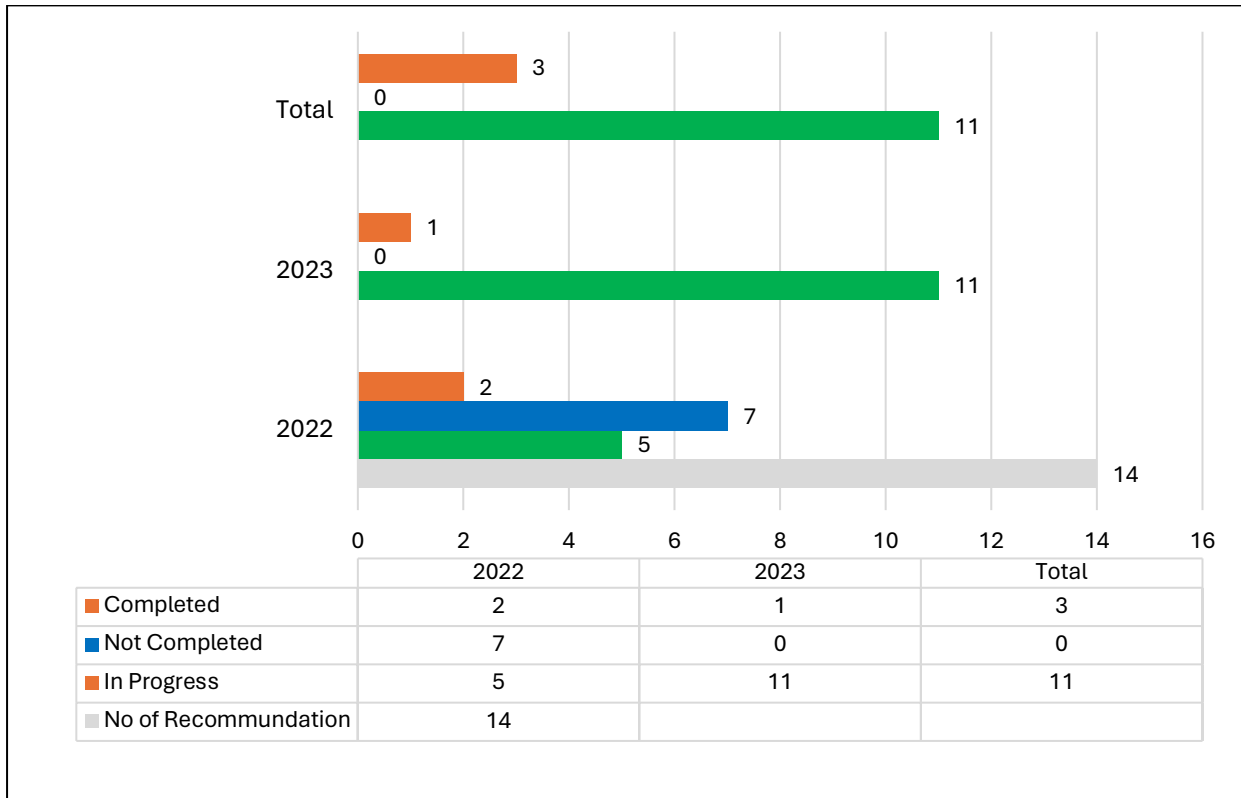


Figure 35: Implementation of Recommendations Related to the Ministry of Planning

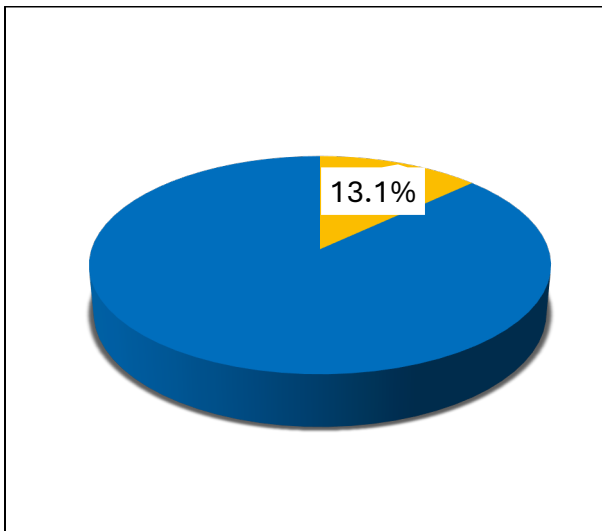


Figure-36 Rates of recommendation execution for 2022-2023

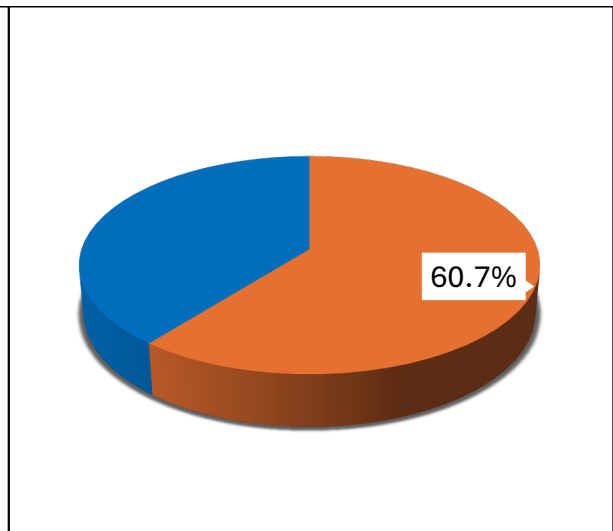


Figure-37 Effort rate of the ministry to completed the recommendations

Implemented Recommendations

1. Develop a comprehensive procurement protocol for the acquisition of pharmaceuticals, medical commodities, apparatus, and associated services, aligning with established frameworks. Leverage international standards to foster an environment conducive to fair competition, both domestically and globally, and integrate them judiciously into the procurement process.
2. Sustain the robust execution of the Poverty Alleviation Strategy spanning 2018 to 2022 and the National Development Blueprint for the same period. Allocate requisite resources to support their realization, thereby fostering enhanced living standards for the populace and advancing the pursuit of sustainable development objectives.
3. Furnish categorized data pertaining to unemployment rates, facilitating a nuanced understanding of the prevailing economic landscape.

Recommendations Under Consideration for Implementation:

1. Persist in enacting reforms to enhance institutional capacity in alignment with the objectives outlined in the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
2. Embrace a developmental approach focused on galvanizing the private sector and fostering investment to champion and uphold human rights.
3. Ensure the allocation of requisite resources to effectively execute plans and strategies pertaining to development and poverty alleviation.
4. Sustain efforts to advance and implement poverty reduction policies and strategies by adopting programs that empower the populace, thereby fostering optimal growth and prosperity.
5. Further, advanced economic and social development endeavors to elevate the standard of living for all individuals.
6. Enhance support for refugees, augmenting resources allocated to them, and accord priority to their needs within social assistance frameworks.
7. Persevere poverty alleviation endeavors, with particular emphasis on rural regions.
8. Deliberate upon inquiries from esteemed bodies such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Washington Disability Statistics Team in preparation for the proposed census.
9. Strive for a substantial augmentation in the availability of high-quality, dependable data categorized by social status, economic standing, gender, age, lineage, ethnicity, migration status, disability, and geographical location.
10. Continue to advocate for urban planning policies that ensure comprehensive growth for the entire populace.
11. Formulate a strategic framework to counteract the proliferation of poverty within regions targeted by extremist activities, such as those affected by ISIS.

Below are the measures, laws, guidelines, procedures, and practical steps taken in implementing the international recommendations:

Develop a strategy to combat the spread of poverty in the provinces targeted by ISIS

The Ministry of Planning is committed to endorsing and giving precedence to initiatives that directly benefit the populace across all spheres, working in conjunction with relevant entities such as the Ministries of Health, Education, Social Affairs, and Reconstruction, as well as external organizations and enterprises.

All proposals aimed at uplifting these regions, submitted by the aforementioned stakeholders, receive immediate attention and are prioritized for swift implementation.

General Contracts of the Kurdistan Regional Government

The Ministry of Planning, in collaboration with pertinent ministries and Korean expert teams, is diligently crafting a comprehensive framework for the procurement of pharmaceuticals, medical requisites, apparatus, and associated services. This endeavor meticulously considers international protocols, leveraging them to foster an environment of equitable competition within the ambit of the Kurdistan Regional Government's public contracts system. This initiative, inaugurated in 2018, is slated for implementation commencing from 5/12/2. It offers a valuable resource for the concerned ministries, empowering them to seamlessly navigate the procurement lifecycle, from solicitation to contract execution.

This innovative system streamlines the process, enabling all enterprises to partake in competitive bidding and project execution with utmost ease. The project design has reached fruition, with the requisite infrastructure and servers now operational within the Government Information Technology Office.

Enhance the efficacy of institutions in alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (2030).

To enhance and modernize institutional efficacy in alignment with the United Nations' 2030 Sustainable Development Plan, the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) Statistical Board, in collaboration with the (UNDP) and with financial backing from (USAID), is conducting a comprehensive survey of economic entities. This initiative encompasses meticulous data collection on the scale and composition of micro, small, and medium enterprises, workforce demographics, formal and informal operational dynamics, as well as the identification of barriers and challenges. Additionally, the survey aims to gauge the level of female participation in the institutional landscape and evaluate other pertinent indicators of institutional quality.

This survey constitutes a pivotal component of the strategic initiatives outlined by the Ministry of Planning, as delineated in the mid-2021 plan developed by the Kurdistan Regional Statistical Board. It aims to enhance the professional competencies of the private sector workforce, streamline bureaucratic processes, reform the registration procedures for informal enterprises, and bolster the pivotal role of the private sector in driving economic progress.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Planning, in collaboration with international consultants, has spearheaded the initial drafting phase of the Kurdistan Region's Vision 2030. This involved convening multiple workshops to engage stakeholders in substantive discussions aimed at refining and augmenting the foundational pillars of the draft framework.

Training courses in 2022-2023

In 2022:

- The Ministry of Planning, in collaboration with the South Korean Agency (KOICA), has orchestrated several pivotal training sessions tailored for distinguished personnel and officials within the Kurdistan Regional Government, encompassing various sectors. The Ministry's endeavor to digitize public contracts has been diligently pursued and remains ongoing. Additionally, it has facilitated numerous opportunities for advanced education (master's and doctoral degrees) for KRG staff.
- In the realm of higher education initiatives, the Ministry of Planning, in conjunction with KOICA, annually disseminates comprehensive guidance to all ministries and departments of the Kurdistan Regional Government during the designated months (February-March). These sessions elucidate the requisite conditions, protocols, and procedural nuances set forth by this esteemed organization.

Foremost among the initiatives conducted by this collaborative effort in 2022 was a course addressing policies and protocols pertinent to the integration of information technology within governmental agencies.

In 2023:

- Training courses on e-government.
- Public procurement system modernization project.

KIPA Directorate of Training and Exercise

In 2023, the Directorate of Training and Exercise at KIPA oversaw a comprehensive array of courses within the region, totaling (750) participants. Among these participants, there were (450) male and (230) female attendees. The courses covered diverse areas including public policy management, strategic planning, legal awareness, international relations, quality assurance, institutional management, administrative relations, decentralized public accounting systems, legal interpretations pertaining to the dismissal of public and public sector employees, project management, problem-solving and decision-making strategies, planning and management methodologies, energy conservation practices, public contracts oversight, strategic management principles, e-governance, and marketing strategies tailored to the public sector.

Poverty Alleviation Strategy 2018 – 2022

Addressing the sustained execution of the Poverty Reduction Strategy spanning 2018-2022, alongside the National Development Plan for the same period, and ensuring adequate resource allocation to facilitate their effective implementation, with the overarching goal of enhancing the quality of life for citizens. The Social Development Fund, operating in tandem with the Ministry of Planning of the Iraqi government, has diligently undertaken initiatives aimed at enhancing infrastructure and socio-economic conditions in rural and peri-urban communities.

Following a meticulous assessment to identify the underprivileged communities within the provinces of the Kurdistan Region, targeted assistance will be extended in collaboration with the World Bank to facilitate the execution of micro-level development initiatives. Notable project implementations occurred in Duhok province in 2019, Sulaimani province in 2020, and Erbil province in 2021.

Facilitating training programs aimed at enhancing vocational competencies among individuals with limited financial means, encompassing professions such as hairstyling and garment production, thereby fostering avenues for sustainable employment opportunities.

- Endeavors will be undertaken to formulate a comprehensive social security framework by (2024), with the objective of enhancing accessibility to this system for youth, workers, employees, and individuals engaged in the informal economy, based on employment opportunities and labor market initiatives. This initiative particularly aims to augment the livelihoods of workers, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities.
- By (2024), individuals most susceptible to socio-economic vulnerabilities will avail themselves of knowledge management systems, alongside the reinforced capacities of national institutions, to fortify social protection mechanisms.
- The World Food Programme (WFP) primarily focuses on the integrated registry of the public distribution system (food receipts), wherein preparations have been made to interconnect beneficiary institutions through this platform.

Programs related to poverty reduction

The Ministry of Planning has prioritized initiatives aimed at enhancing the well-being of citizens across various domains, particularly focusing on poverty alleviation, healthcare provision, literacy promotion, and the facilitation of essential services such as water and sanitation infrastructure. Numerous initiatives have been successfully completed, while others are currently underway, spanning the following sectors:

- Educational endeavors encompassing 151 institutions.
- Healthcare initiatives covering 71 medical facilities.
- Water and Sewerage projects totaling 487 endeavors.
- Housing and service provisions tailored to disadvantaged communities, comprising 55 initiatives.
- Social Development Reform initiatives, numbering 12 projects.

- Infrastructure enhancements including the construction and upkeep of rural road networks, with 166 projects underway.

In total, the Ministry oversees 942 projects, all geared towards enhancing societal welfare and fostering inclusive development.

Classified statistics on unemployment

As per the findings derived from the employment assessment carried out in 2021, the employment metric within the Kurdistan Region manifests at varying levels across its provinces, notably registering a rate of (16.8%) at the provincial level, with figures observed in Erbil (17.7%), Sulaimani (12%), Duhok (24.1%), and Halabja (1.4%). Gender-wise, the recorded unemployment rates in the Kurdistan Region depict a divergence, with the male demographic experiencing a rate of 13.6% and the female demographic observing a rate of 29.6%.

Facilitating private sector engagement and fostering investment

The Ministry of Planning, in collaboration with pertinent ministries, is actively engaged in formulating the draft economic reform plan for the Kurdistan Region spanning 2021 to 2023. Additionally, various reports and studies have been meticulously prepared, encompassing topics such as Income Source Diversification and Employment Generation, the Role of the Tourism Sector in Sustainable Development, and the Enhancement of Export Capacity for Industrial Goods.

Emphasis has been placed on initiatives directly contributing to economic advancement and enhancing the standard of living for citizens. To this end, a specialized conference was convened in Halabja, with the primary objective of addressing economic growth and alleviating poverty in outlying areas and rural communities.

Economic and social development and enhancement of quality of life for citizens.

The Ministry of Planning, in partnership with various organizations, has undertaken the following initiatives to enhance citizen services:

- Strategically partitioning the Kurdistan Region into multiple municipalities to ensure equitable distribution of aid to all areas. This is being coordinated with relevant ministries to ensure seamless service delivery across international channels without bias.
- Implementing a comprehensive database system to identify aid recipients, ensuring equitable coverage for those who have not yet received assistance. Special emphasis is placed on extending aid reach to the provinces of Duhok, Nineveh, and underserved conflict zones.
- Facilitating the reintegration of out-of-school children into the education system at any juncture.
- Addressing the healthcare needs of every family, particularly underserved children from impoverished backgrounds.

Nationwide Demographic Survey

The Iraqi Ministry of Planning has resolved to initiate a comprehensive demographic survey across Iraq, encompassing the Kurdistan Region, scheduled for later this year, specifically on 20/11/2024.

In alignment with the directives of the Ministry of Planning of the Federal Government, all challenges pertaining to the forthcoming survey have been duly addressed through collaborative efforts between the Iraqi government and the Federal Court. Ongoing endeavors to address financial considerations persist, underscored by robust collaboration with the United Nations Housing Fund, aimed at ensuring adherence to globally recognized standards throughout the process.

Exploration of socio-economic circumstances within households

This survey, undertaken in partnership with the Iraqi Central Statistical Agency and with the coordination and technical backing of the World Bank, represents a pivotal statistical endeavor spanning one year, slated for conclusion in early 2025. Its primary objective is to ascertain the prevailing living standards across households. Furthermore, the outcomes of this inquiry will serve as a foundation for revising and delineating the poverty metrics, particularly pertaining to individuals falling below the poverty threshold.

This survey includes 25 sections and consists of the following areas:

- Family demographic characteristics: which include information classified according to age, gender, social status, and geographical location.
- Education sector.
- Health Sector: Topics related to disability (challenges) have been recommended by the Washington Team.
- Housing sector.
- Body measurements.
- Employment and unemployment rate.
- Food security.
- Agriculture sector.
- Food department.
- Individual and family income and expenditure.
- Loans and advances.
- Bringing about justice.

Multi-indicator Residual Survey 7th Round (MICS7)

The primary objective of this survey is to evaluate the health status of women aged 15-49 years and children under 5 years old. Additionally, it serves as a pivotal data source for computing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) indicators across various domains including education, healthcare, family services, water and sanitation, as well as child labor, among other key metrics.

The survey is being undertaken by the Kurdistan Regional Statistical Board in collaboration with the Iraqi Central Statistical Agency, under the auspices of UNICEF, reflecting a concerted effort towards its realization. As per the outlined schedule, its implementation is anticipated to be completed by the conclusion of the forthcoming year.

Survey for Evaluating the Influence of Employment and Socioeconomic Factors on Individuals with Disabilities in the Kurdistan Region

The primary objective of this survey is to evaluate the health status of individuals with disabilities, incorporating insights derived from the Washington Team's assessments, educational attainment, workforce participation, unemployment rates, and their specific requirements pertaining to healthcare and educational services. This initiative is being undertaken collaboratively with the Iraqi Central Statistical Agency and is currently undergoing the concluding phases of data analysis under their auspices.

Facilitating Private Sector Engagement and Investment

The implementation of Directive No. (1) of 2023 regarding public-private partnership initiatives represents a significant stride in the strategic planning framework within the Kurdistan Regional Government. This directive holds considerable implications for enhancing economic infrastructure development and is overseen by the Ministry of Planning through the auspices of the Public-Private Sector Joint Unit Directorate.

Coordination with international parties

- Collaboration has been established to enhance economic infrastructure with the support of the United Nations, European Union, Germany, and Japan.
- Substantial efforts have been dedicated to digitizing interagency coordination with the aid of the international community.
- Partnership with UNICEF is underway to ensure universal access to clean water for all citizens.
- Joint initiatives include the establishment of multiple groundwater desalination ponds in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture and the World Food Programme.
- In March 2023, the Ministry of Planning, in collaboration with the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and esteemed partner organizations such as UNICEF, WFP, and ILO, endorsed a preliminary document aimed at alleviating poverty. The outlined plan encompasses a series of strategic actions:

- Crafting a preliminary version of the social protection strategy, with valuable support from UNICEF. This preliminary document is slated for translation into Kurdish by December 2024, after which it will be submitted to pertinent ministries within the Kurdistan Regional Government for meticulous review and feedback.
- By the year 2024, individuals with modest incomes will reap the benefits of enhanced information system management and bolstered institutional capacities, aimed at refining the design and streamlining interventions within the social protection system.
- The World Food Program (WFP) predominantly relies on the comprehensive registry of the public distribution system (food receipts). The development of the integrated registry form has been meticulously orchestrated to facilitate seamless connectivity among participating institutions, thereby maximizing the efficacy of this platform.

Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs

The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs received (83) recommendations in 2022. Of these, (20) recommendations have been implemented, (56) recommendations remain unimplemented, and (7) recommendations were in the process of implementation. By 2023, the number of implemented recommendations rose to (39) recommendations, while unimplemented recommendations decreased to (18) recommendations. Additionally, (26) recommendations were in various stages of implementation. In this regard the implementation rate becomes (62.7%).

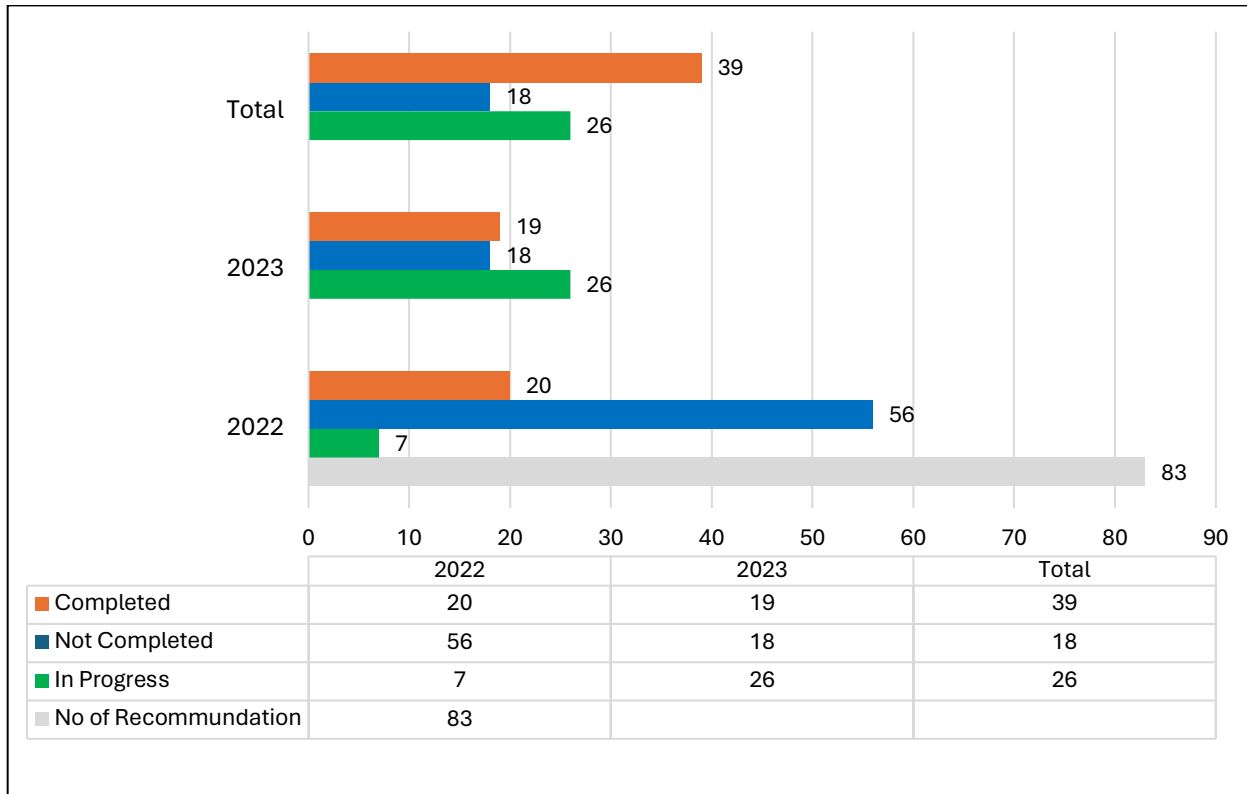


Figure 38: Implementation of Recommendations Related to the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs

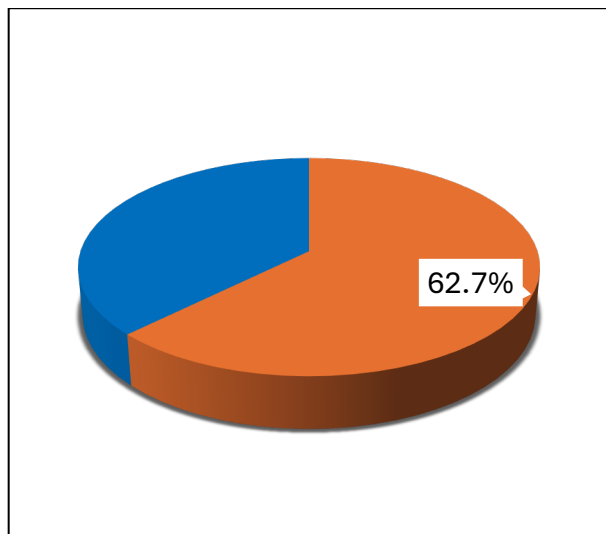


Figure-39 Rates of recommendation execution for 2022-2023

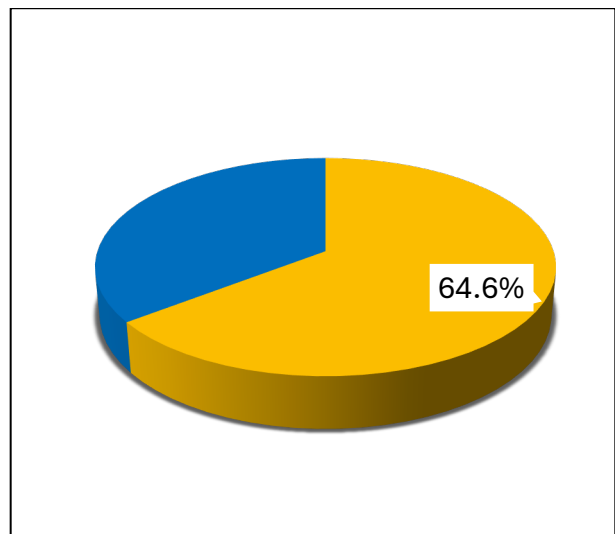


Figure-40 Effort rate of the ministry to completed the recommendations

Implemented Recommendations

1. Affirm the rights of individuals with disabilities to participate in voting and candidacy for elections.
2. Replace the term "disabled" with "handicapped" to lessen the psychological impact and align with human rights principles.
3. Ensure the registration of all children with disabilities to prevent statelessness.
4. Facilitate the involvement of individuals with disabilities in electoral processes by eliminating participation barriers.
5. Take measures to safeguard children from violence and exploitation, including rescuing those held by terrorist groups, reuniting them with their families, and providing necessary support services.
6. Strengthen the Child Welfare Board's capacity to oversee children's rights and promptly address issues.
7. Foster a culture of child protection by supporting artistic and sports talents and promoting related activities.
8. Ensure representation of individuals with disabilities, particularly women and those with intellectual or psychological challenges, in disability oversight bodies.
9. Increase employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities within the public sector.
10. Facilitate job placement for individuals with disabilities, including women and those with psychosocial or intellectual challenges, in the mainstream job market through training, financial support, and incentives for employers.
11. Ensure the registration of all individuals with disabilities to facilitate their access to social protection programs, in alignment with disability-inclusive models and human rights principles.
12. Investigate all allegations of torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment against children to ensure accountability and deterrence.
13. Take necessary measures to enact child protection laws and ensure their effective enforcement.
14. Ensure that children with disabilities have full access to their rights as stipulated in international conventions, and actively work to eliminate the stigma and discrimination they face, particularly those experiencing intersecting forms of prejudice.
15. Allocate adequate human, financial, and material resources for the rehabilitation, mental health services, sanitation, education, and vocational training of persons with disabilities.
16. Guarantee equal access to judicial procedures for individuals with intellectual, psychological, or social disabilities, ensuring procedures are gender and age-appropriate.
17. Establish monitoring mechanisms to prevent torture and other forms of ill-treatment of persons with disabilities in various settings, including mental health facilities, correctional institutions, and care facilities.

18. Establish an accessible mechanism for disabled individuals to report and seek redress for instances of torture or ill-treatment, providing legal assistance and information in a user-friendly manner.
19. Take immediate steps to ensure that all children with disabilities have access to free education.
20. Promote the social, economic, and cultural rights of persons with disabilities.
21. Build capacity and resources among stakeholders for collecting statistics and data on persons with disabilities.
22. Review Article 32 of the Constitution concerning the state's responsibility towards persons with disabilities, ensuring alignment with international standards.
23. Align the laws of the Kurdistan Regional Government, including those related to the rights of persons with disabilities, with the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
24. Ensure equality before the law for persons with disabilities.
25. Promote measures to uphold the rights of persons with disabilities through legislative reforms, infrastructure improvements, and building accessibility adaptations.
26. Ensure the accessibility of school facilities for children with disabilities, equip teachers with appropriate training, and prioritize the provision of tailored child development services, as outlined in Article 40(4) of the Figure er.
27. Adjust budget allocations based on the severity of disability determined by a specialized medical committee following criteria established by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs.
28. Foster the participation of individuals with disabilities, particularly women with disabilities, in decision-making processes concerning their rights.
29. Revise the Social Insurance Law No. 39 of 1971 (Pension and Social Insurance for Workers Law).
30. Recognize the disproportionate impact of armed conflict and violence on disabled individuals, resulting in increased injuries and limited access to essential services, particularly in the Kurdistan Region.
31. Address the oversight in the management of refugee cases in Iraq, as outlined in Council of Ministers Decision No. 414 of 2015, by incorporating provisions for individual support to persons with disabilities during emergencies.
32. Incorporate considerations for the rights of persons with disabilities into legislation, strategies, and regional action plans pertaining to children.
33. Enhance vocational training programs in translation and expand the availability of sign language instructors for individuals with disabilities.
34. Ensure the release of all children not formally charged with crimes, adhering to international standards for juvenile justice and respecting the principles outlined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

35. Intensify efforts to realize economic, social, and cultural rights, including the promotion of social protection initiatives.
36. Further, strengthen measures aimed at safeguarding the rights of migrant workers in alignment with pertinent international agreements.
37. Prioritize the provision of free healthcare services for individuals with disabilities.
38. Conduct a review of Article 105 concerning the imprisonment of individuals deemed mentally unfit.
39. Amend labor legislation to guarantee employment rights for women across all sectors.

Unmet Recommendations:

1. Conduct extensive awareness campaigns, engaging individuals with disabilities, to promote their rights, eliminate discrimination, and enhance their involvement in political and public spheres.
2. Enhance employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities in accordance with Article 40, Clause 4 of the Figure er.
3. Implement comprehensive measures to eradicate multifaceted discrimination, particularly against women with disabilities residing in rural areas, among refugee or immigrant populations, and within various ethnic, religious, or linguistic communities (directly targeted to the KRG).
4. Implement effective measures, with the active involvement of organizations representing women and girls with disabilities, to integrate disability considerations into all policies and laws pertaining to gender issues, including the Domestic Violence Protection Bill, and mainstream gender inclusivity across disability-related policies and laws.
5. Revoke appellate decisions hindering individuals with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities from exercising their voting and candidacy rights, while ensuring their active participation in political and public life.
6. Facilitate the electoral participation of individuals with disabilities by ensuring easy access to polling stations, providing electoral materials in accessible formats such as Braille and sign language, and enabling their participation in elections.
7. Implement segregation measures for drug offenders within correctional facilities.
8. Develop rehabilitation programs for individuals affected by drug abuse.
9. Implement measures to prevent discrimination against individuals with disabilities during deprivation of facilities, and ensure that support and facilitation measures are provided to disabled individuals suspected of committing crimes, tailored to their individual needs during detention.
10. Establish monitoring mechanisms to prevent torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment in all instances where individuals with disabilities are deprived of their liberty.

11. Intensify efforts to enforce labor laws regarding the determination of minimum working age and working conditions for juveniles.
12. Formulate policies to enhance employment opportunities in the private sector and provide categorized statistics on corruption.
13. Ensure the participation of women, children, and individuals with disabilities in the formulation of laws and programs related to environmental change and the mitigation of environmental disaster risks.
14. Develop a strategy for providing direct assistive technologies, mobile applications, professional sign language interpreters, and other means to facilitate easy access to buildings, facilities, public transportation, and information and communication technology services.
15. Take necessary measures to enable individuals with mental, social, or intellectual disabilities, as well as those with visual and hearing impairments, to access courts by removing all obstacles, ensuring their genuine participation in judicial proceedings, and providing information in accessible formats such as Braille, easy reading, and sign language, while increasing the availability of professional sign language interpreters.
16. Establish a direct hotline for reporting cases of domestic violence accessible to individuals with disabilities.
17. Implement essential measures to offer medical, psychological, and material assistance, encompassing various forms of support and appropriate compensation, such as rights restoration, rehabilitation, satisfaction, and measures to prevent recurrence, particularly focusing on individuals with disabilities.
18. Develop comprehensive, precise, and regularly updated statistics concerning individuals with disabilities, categorized by age, gender, disability type, and participation rate in the labor market.

Recommendations Under Implementation:

1. Establish a monitoring mechanism to prevent torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment in situations where individuals with disabilities are deprived of their liberty, alongside the creation of an accessible complaint mechanism for persons with disabilities.
2. Implement effective measures, in collaboration with organizations representing women and girls with disabilities, to integrate disability considerations into all gender-related policies and laws, including the Domestic Violence Protection Bill, and ensure gender inclusivity in disability-related policies and legislation.
3. Officially recognize sign language and expand vocational training programs for sign language translation to enhance the participation of individuals with disabilities in sign language instruction and reliance on sign language interpreters.
4. Intensify efforts to eradicate multifaceted discrimination against women and girls with disabilities, particularly in rural areas, among displaced or refugee populations, and within various ethnic, religious, or linguistic communities.

5. Create employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities in the mainstream labor market, facilitate access to loans, provide tailored vocational training, and implement measures to incentivize employers to hire individuals with disabilities.
6. Facilitate the electoral participation of individuals with disabilities by ensuring accessibility to polling stations.
7. Develop comprehensive, up-to-date statistics on individuals with disabilities, categorized by age, gender, disability type, and labor market participation rate.
8. Enact legislation safeguarding children's rights and ensure effective implementation measures.
9. Ensure the realization of all rights outlined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child in the event of enacting legislation on children.
10. Prioritize the best interests of the child as a fundamental criterion in all legal proceedings.
11. Uphold the rights of individuals with disabilities and formulate a national policy to protect children's rights.
12. Protect children from violence and sexual exploitation, allocating necessary resources for their rehabilitation and societal reintegration.
13. Enact legislation governing correctional and detention facilities in alignment with international standards.
14. Address prison overcrowding issues and ensure humane treatment for individuals deprived of liberty.
15. Approach drug abuse as a health issue, providing psychological and medical interventions for rehabilitation purposes.
16. Refrain from treating drug users and addicts as mere prisoners.
17. Enact legislation governing the management of prisons and detention facilities, implementing measures to alleviate overcrowding and ensure appropriate treatment for all individuals deprived of liberty.
18. Foster genuine consultation and participation of individuals with disabilities through their representative organizations, by adopting a national strategy and organizing awareness campaigns to promote a positive perception of persons with disabilities as rightful beneficiaries of all human rights enshrined in the Convention.
19. Redouble efforts to enact and enforce legislation concerning drugs and psychotropic substances, emphasizing the establishment of addiction rehabilitation centers as mandated by law. Promote extensive awareness among adolescents regarding the risks and hazards of substance abuse through school programs and media campaigns, facilitating access to addiction treatment services.
20. Allocate requisite human, material, and financial resources to provide individual support for children with disabilities, including those with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities, autism, visual, and hearing impairments, ensuring their access to inclusive education. Eliminate barriers to education for students with disabilities, such as long commutes,

inadequate transportation, shortage of trained teachers for inclusive education, and the absence of easy sign language utilization.

21. Expand social services offered by the Disabled and Handicapped Welfare Board, including the provision of suitable housing units, while consistently updating and appropriately classifying data related to these services.
22. Increase the quota reserved for individuals with disabilities in public-sector employment.
23. Enhance efforts to comply with the 1980 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction by establishing a central authority and implementing requisite national measures.
24. Elevate the status of the Child Welfare Board, enacting legislation to empower its oversight of children's rights and efficient resolution of related issues.
25. Reinforce measures aimed at upholding human rights standards in reform initiatives.
26. Allocate essential human, material, and financial resources to ensure rehabilitation services, mental health care, sanitation, safe accommodations, education, and vocational training.

The following encompasses the actions undertaken to implement international recommendations, encompassing measures, legislation, guidelines, procedures, and practical initiatives:

Research about women suicide cases:

The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs undertook a significant initiative in 2023 to conduct a comprehensive field study on instances of female suicide across the Kurdistan Region, including Erbil (incorporating Soran), Sulaimani (covering Raperin), Duhok (encompassing Zakho Independence), Halabja Province, and the Garmian Administration. This pioneering study marks the first of its kind in the region. Data and statistics for the period spanning 2017 to 2023 were meticulously gathered from various sources, including all police stations under the purview of the Ministry of Interior, the General Directorate of Violence against Women, city-specific Directorate of Violence against Women offices, and the Forensic Medicine department.

Violence statistics between the years (2017- 2023):

Table 23 Statistics of women's suicide in the Kurdistan Region between 2017-2023

Statistics of women's suicide in the Kurdistan Region									
City	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total	Rate
Erbil	37	14	22	25	20	27	15	160	29%
Sulaimani	45	33	40	10	28	32	21	209	38%
Duhok	21	22	17	14	29	26	4	133	24%
Halabja	1	2	1	2	0	2	1	9	2%
Garmian	6	4	3	2	7	10	6	38	7%
The total	110	75	83	53	84	97	47	549	100%
The percentage	20%	14%	15%	10%	15%	18%	9%	100%	

Engagement in International Treaties:

The authority to enter into international agreements lies within the federal jurisdiction, primarily under the purview of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs. Although Iraq has yet to become a member of the International Labour Organization (ILO), efforts have been directed towards ratifying the optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, alongside endorsing the ILO Convention on Decent Work for Domestic Workers (2011) and adopting the Convention on Workers with Family Responsibilities (1981). The latter, issued by the ILO, aims to foster gender equality in the allocation of household and familial duties between men and women.

Legal Safeguards for Individuals with Disabilities:

Significant revisions have been made to the Law on the Rights and Privileges of Persons with Disabilities, transitioning from No. 22 of 2011 to No. 8 of 2021. Amendments encompass aspects such as defining disability, establishing identity protocols, providing shelters, establishing assistance funds for their care, delineating financial entitlements for disabled employees, implementing tailored educational programs, securing access to driver's licenses, facilitating access to housing projects, establishing advanced diagnostic centers for disabilities, and addressing various other facets pertaining to their rights. Notably, the law mandates that a representative from one of the disability associations must sit on the Supervisory Council for Persons with Disabilities, empowering these associations to select a suitable appointee from within their ranks.

Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs Directives

In 2021, 2022, and 2023, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs issued a series of directives in alignment with recommendations directed towards its operations. These directives are outlined as follows:

2021 Directives:

1. Instruction No. (1) of 2021: Establishment of the Disability Determination Center.
2. Directive No. (2) of 2021: Amendment to Directive No. (3) of 2018 concerning Autism Centers.
3. Directive No. (3) of 2021: Amendment to Directive No. (2) of 2016 regarding Persons with Disabilities.
4. Directive No. (4) of 2021: Amendment to Directive No. (1) of 2018 concerning the licensing of domestic worker employment agencies.
5. Instruction No. (5) of 2021: Guidelines for employees of the executive force within the General Directorate of Corrections.

2022 Directives:

1. Directive No. (1) of 2022: First Amendment to Directive on Nursery Cells No. (1) of [year not specified].
2. Directive No. (2) of 2022: Guidelines for surrogate families.
3. Instruction No. (3) of 2022: Regulations for mental hospitals in the Kurdistan Region.
4. Guideline No. (5) of 2022: Guidelines for homes catering to individuals on the autism spectrum for rehabilitation and accommodation.
5. Directive No. (6) of 2022: Second Amendment to Directive No. (1) of 2015 concerning nursery cells.
6. Directive No. (7) of 2022: Third Amendment to Directive No. (2) of 2012 concerning individuals with disabilities and short stature.
7. Directive No. (8) of 2022: Guidelines for foreign workers.
8. Instruction No. (9) of 2022: Amendment to Directive No. (5) of (year not specified).

2023 Directives:

1. Directive No. (1) of 2023: Third Amendment to Directive No. (1) of 2015 concerning nurseries.
2. Instruction No. (2) of 2023: Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs Instruction on Shelter for Threatened Women.
3. Directive No. (3) of 2023: Amendment to Directive No. (4) of 2013 regulating the opening of vocational training centers.
4. Directive No. (4) of 2023: First Amendment to Directive No. (8) of [year not specified] concerning the number of foreign workers.
5. Instruction No. (5) of 2023: Guidelines for obtaining licenses to establish training and qualification centers for individuals with disabilities.
6. Instruction No. (6) of 2023: Guidelines for the employment of convicts and detainees.
7. Directive No. (7) of 2023: Second Amendment to Directive No. (8) of [year not specified] concerning the number of foreign workers.
8. Instruction No. (8) of 2023: Guidelines for the distribution of revenue from public kindergartens.
9. Approval of regulations for the training and qualification of individuals with disabilities, special needs, and short stature by the Council of Ministers.
10. Issuance of Directive No. (9) pertaining to the grant of licenses for the Cerebral Palsy Disability Institute.
11. Issuance of guidelines for shelters catering to individuals on the autism spectrum.
12. Issuance of guidelines for shelters.

Amendment of Labor Legislation, Pension, and Social Security Laws

- The labor legislation pertinent to the Kurdistan Region has successfully navigated all legislative stages and is currently awaiting approval from the Presidency of the Kurdistan Region.
- The Pension and Social Security Bill, forwarded by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs to the Prime Minister's Office, is poised for submission to Parliament for deliberation and approval.
- The ninth cabinet of the Kurdistan Regional Government has established 18 operative committees, encompassing vital areas such as Security, High Employment, Pension, and Market oversight—an inaugural addition to the administrative framework.
- Over the span of three years, the number of awarded projects has surged from 16,500 to 38,500, paralleled by a noteworthy rise in the workforce from 17,000 to 138,000.
- The annual revenue of the Pension and Security Fund has experienced substantial growth within the same timeframe, escalating from 74 billion dinars to 194 billion dinars.
- Notably, during the incumbency of the ninth cabinet, the count of retired workers has increased from 160 to 4189.
- Social security scrutiny committees, comprising an inspector alongside representatives from the Chamber of Commerce and trade unions, systematically conduct visits to both secured and unsecured projects to ensure adherence to operational standards.

Amendment of the Social Insurance Act

With respect to the Social Insurance Law, a notable recommendation has been made for the amendment of Law No. 39 of 1971. Specifically, within the Kurdistan Region, amendments have been enacted through Law No. 4 of 2012.

Issuance of Occupational Health and Safety Directives

In late February 2024, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs promulgated Directive No. 11 of 2023 delineating Occupational Health and Safety standards across 12 articles, subsequently published in the Kurdistan Reality Gazette.

Article 3 of the directive stipulates that the labor inspection committee shall consolidate observations regarding labor requisites and occupational health and safety into reports from project inspection visits. It is incumbent upon the inspection committee to identify instances of negligence concerning work prerequisites and lapses in compliance with occupational health and safety protocols during project execution.

Furthermore, the directive confers authority upon the minister to suspend operations or close workplaces, based on the inspection committee's recommendation, in cases of non-compliance with occupational health and safety standards. Such suspensions warrant full wage entitlements for affected workers until the grounds for closure are rectified.

Conversely, the directive delineates measures and principles for ensuring and safeguarding the occupational safety and health of workers, alongside delineating the rights and obligations of both workers and employers commensurate with factory scale and workforce size.

Moreover, the guideline emphasizes the evaluation and assessment of workplace environments to mitigate health risks for workers and to uphold their rights in instances of health-related challenges.

Right to work and social insurance:

- Under the auspices of the ninth cabinet of the Kurdistan Regional Government, approximately 138,000 workers have been facilitated, alongside the creation of approximately 100,000 direct employment opportunities.
- A memorandum of understanding has been established between the Ministries of Higher Education and Labor and Social Affairs, aiming to inaugurate a vocational department with a focus on equipping citizens for the exigencies of the labor market.
- The issuance of professional licenses has risen from 17,000 to 20,000, indicative of a proactive approach towards workforce development.
- Notably, around 1,300 diverse vocational courses have been administered for citizens, with a particular emphasis on youth, in order to bolster their preparedness for integration into the labor market.

Child Rights Protection Law

- Within the strategic framework of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, a pivotal initiative aims at safeguarding children from exploitation and maltreatment while ensuring their access to a dignified standard of living.
- A comprehensive draft of legislation addressing the rights of children has been meticulously crafted and submitted to the Council of Ministers for endorsement and subsequent presentation to the parliament. Comprising 82 articles, the draft law envisages the establishment of a council tasked with devising strategies, frameworks, and policies to safeguard children's interests and uphold their rights.
- Article 3/2 of the proposed legislation underscores the paramountcy of children's welfare.
- Article 3/3 of the draft legislation emphasizes shielding children from all forms of violence, exploitation, and psychological or physical abuse, bolstered by therapeutic interventions.
- Articles 3/4 and 9 of the draft Children's Rights Bill delineate the formulation of a national agenda to safeguard children's rights and ensure the dignity of disabled individuals.

Children's Rights Protection

- The Child Rights Protection Bill designates the Child Protection Board as the Child Protection Council under Article 25.
- The establishment of the High Council for the Protection of Children's Rights, comprising representatives from (9) ministries and (2) departments, signifies a concerted effort towards safeguarding children's welfare.
- In Sulaimani, a new shelter has been inaugurated to accommodate orphaned girls, emblematic of endeavors to provide essential care and support.
- A total of 77,120 women and children have undergone training facilitated by 27 dedicated centers, underscoring the commitment to empowering vulnerable segments of society.
- Notably, in compliance with Letter No. 8789 dated 28/11/2022, juveniles residing in orphanages who have attained the age of 18 within the past three years are eligible for contractual employment within the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs.
- Approval has been secured for the kindergarten system to allocate 40% of funds towards staff incentives, 40% towards construction, and 20% towards government coffers, highlighting an equitable distribution strategy.
- A comprehensive survey targeting child laborers and street workers in Sulaimani province has been conducted, with 1,466 individuals identified in Sulaimani and Halabja provinces. A tailored action plan is underway to address their needs and integrate them into appropriate care and support systems.

Establishment of Youth Training Courses:

- The establishment of a vocational training center in Chamchamal stands as a testament to the Kurdistan Regional Government's commitment to facilitating skill development among the region's youth.
- Youth engagement in vocational courses and training programs has been actively promoted through the inauguration of 165 courses, resulting in the empowerment of 2,234 individuals.
- Over the course of the past three years, a cumulative total of 441 courses have been launched, with 6,237 individuals reaping the benefits of these educational initiatives.

Enhancing Elderly Care Services

Through collaborative endeavors between the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and benefactors, a decision has been reached to construct a dedicated facility for the elderly in Erbil spanning an area of 7,500 square meters, adhering to stringent international standards.

Correction Centers Administration Reform Law

The imperative to address the conditions within prisons and detention centers aligns with international directives aimed at upholding human rights principles and meeting global standards. This legislation seeks to comprehensively enhance the rehabilitation framework across all facets of correctional administration.

Provision of Services within Correction Centers

- A total of 520 prisoners have benefitted from comprehensive training courses, vocational programs, and workshops, while 3,145 inmates have participated in various educational workshops and seminars.
- Sustained healthcare services have been provided to prisoners, with approximately 38,567 diverse medical services rendered across correctional facility health centers in the Kurdistan Region since the commencement of 2022.
- Currently, 344 prisoners are gainfully employed in workshops within prison facilities, contributing to their rehabilitation and skill development.
- Monthly allowances are extended to juvenile inmates and children residing with their incarcerated mothers, mirroring the support provided to children in orphanages and specialized institutes for individuals with disabilities. This initiative aims to alleviate the financial burdens faced by juvenile inmates and their accompanying guardians.
- The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, in collaboration with the Ministry of Higher Education, has facilitated tuition-free education for prisoners enrolled in universities and colleges across the Kurdistan Region, fostering opportunities for academic advancement and rehabilitation.

Social protection measures

- The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs has formulated a comprehensive strategic plan spanning the years 2022 to 2026, endorsed by the Council of Ministers, with a primary focus on employment and social security provisions for workers.
- Legislation governing the right to work and social security has been reinforced, reflecting the Ministry's commitment to ensuring adequate social security coverage for workers engaged in various projects and enterprises. To bolster safeguards for employees within these settings, the Ministry has augmented the cadre of labor inspectors.
- A pioneering initiative has seen the appointment of 12 labor inspectors within trade unions, marking a significant milestone in regulatory oversight. Moreover, the Social Security Directorate has established a dedicated database to streamline worker security concerns, facilitating prompt assistance. Legal representatives from the Ministry are poised to advocate for workers' rights in judicial proceedings, underscoring a proactive approach to protecting labor interests.

Registering of Individuals with Disabilities for Social Protection Programs:

Facilitate the comprehensive registration of individuals with disabilities to avail themselves of social protection initiatives, accompanied by the preparation of detailed reports to reassess and identify disabled individuals.

A budget allocation of (150,000) dinars has been designated to provide disability stipends and supplementary care, in addition to their regular income. Furthermore, individuals with disabilities will be granted leave with reduced working hours to accommodate their needs.

Table 24 Statistics of social welfare beneficiaries in institutes and centers in the Kurdistan Region

Social welfare beneficiaries in Kurdistan Regional Institutes	
City	The total
Erbil	411
Sulaimani	179
Duhok	101
Halabja	0
Garmian	68
The total	759

Table25 Statistics of Social Welfare Beneficiaries in Child Activity and Protection Centers

Social welfare beneficiaries in child activity and protection centers in the Kurdistan Region	
City	The total
Erbil	773
Sulaimani	28332
Duhok	-
Halabja	654
Ranya	819
Garmian	35040
Zakho	1992
Soran	2165
The total	69775

Discharge of Individuals with Mental Health Conditions in Public Areas

Efforts toward amending Article (4/495) of the Iraqi Penal Code pertaining to the release of individuals with mental health disorders in public spaces have not been initiated, and no legislative proposal has been formulated by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs. However, the Ministry of Health has issued Directive No. 1 of 2024 outlining protocols for the treatment and rehabilitation of mentally ill women in psychiatric hospitals.

In response to this gap, the Ministry has promulgated Directive No. 4 (Guideline No. 4 of 2024) addressing the care of individuals with severe disabilities. These disabilities encompass chronic conditions and mental illnesses such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and depression, rendering individual's incapable of meeting their basic needs and resulting in their presence on the streets and in public spaces. Recognizing the strain placed on families and society, the Ministry issued Statement No. 10 in 2023, signaling the establishment of a secure residence (MALI ARAM) in Chamchamal for their treatment and care.

Disability Training and Qualification Fund

The draft regulations governing the Disability Training and Qualification Fund have been formally submitted to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers in accordance with the provisions outlined in Law No. (22) of 2011, concerning the Rights and Privileges of Individuals with Disabilities, as amended by Law No. (8) of 2021.

Revision of Terminology Pertaining to Disabilities

In alignment with contemporary discourse surrounding disabilities, efforts have been made to amend terminology within relevant legislation. Beyond the term "disabled," provisions now encompass a broader spectrum, acknowledging individuals with various disabilities, including those with impaired vision and other challenges. Furthermore, in accordance with the Universal Declaration on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the terminology "persons with disabilities" has been adopted, reflecting a more inclusive and respectful approach.

Categorization of Individuals with Disabilities and Special Needs

In an endeavor to systematically categorize individuals with disabilities, the (KRG) has implemented a database system to compile comprehensive information on beneficiaries with disabilities across governmental sectors. This database encompasses pertinent details such as age, gender, specific disability types, and severity levels, thereby facilitating efficient management and provision of services. Additionally, each disabled beneficiary is furnished with a smart identification card for streamlined access to support services.

- To further enhance data collection efforts, the Information Technology Office of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance and Economy, has been tasked with deploying technical infrastructure under the biometric registration program. This initiative aims to gather robust statistics and data pertaining to individuals with disabilities, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of their demographics and needs.
- In tandem, the General Directorate of Labor and Social Security is actively engaged in compiling statistical insights into the participation of individuals with disabilities within the labor market. Efforts are underway to collate data on their presence, categorized by age, gender, and disability type, as well as the distribution across various industries and enterprises.

Furthermore, collaborative endeavors between the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and the Kurdistan Child Protection Organization are underway to issue identity cards to children residing in care centers, encompassing both genders. To facilitate this process, a roster containing the names of such children has been forwarded to the organization, aiming to ensure their access to essential identification documentation.

Beneficiaries of disability benefits will retain their financial entitlements until 2014

However, the registration process for disabled individuals was halted following the financial crisis. Subsequently, a dedicated committee within the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs has commenced the re-registration procedure

Table 26 Disability statistics as of

Disabled persons registered until 2014	
Ordinary disabled	71,303
Disabled employees	5,762
Total number of disabled persons	77,065

Table 27 Statistics of the new number of disabled people in 2023

The number of new disabled people in the Kurdistan Region in 2023 has been registered	
city	The total
Erbil	7704
Sulaimani	5019
Duhok	5008
Halabja	303
Garmian	1245
The total	19,279

The disabled who are in the process of registration in the Kurdistan Region in 2023

Table 28 Stages of New Registration Disabled

New number of disabled people in Erbil, Sulaimani, Duhok, Halabja, Garmian 2023	
Total recorded	19,279
It has been evaluated by a special committee	15,175
It has not been evaluated by a special committee	4,104

Utilize a database system to categorize individuals with disabilities for specialized medical committees:

- The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs has introduced a database system consolidating essential data concerning individuals with disabilities.
- Over 12,000 new registrations of disabled individuals have been processed online by the medical committee, approved, and await final endorsement by the Council of Ministers.
- Efforts are underway to integrate banks into the social protection network in Erbil. This initiative aims to streamline disability payments, minimizing administrative burdens and reducing the risk of corruption.

Disbursement of Disability Salaries and Grants from January 1, 2023, to June 1, 2024:

- In accordance with Instruction Number 3 issued on January 25, 2022, a monthly stipend of 150,000 dinars will be provided as assistance to individuals with disabilities who are not employed. Additionally, a grant of 1,000,000 dinars will be allocated to those with disabilities who are employed. This initiative incurs a monthly expenditure of eleven billion one hundred and seventy-seven million eight hundred and fifty thousand dinars.

Table 29 Number of unpaid disabled and indigent disabled

Disabled type	person	The amount of assistance allocated in dinars	Total meritorious
Number of unpaid disabled persons	69310	150,000	10,396,500,000
Number of poverties disabled	6751	100,000	675,100,000
The Total			11,071,600,000

Facilitating Sign Language Support for the Deaf:

- Disability pensions for eligible pensioners will now include an additional allowance. Specifically, a disability rate of 100,000 will be provided to these pensioners.
- As mandated by the Disability Law, Article 3/4 emphasizes the provision of sign language. The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs collaborates with various private institutes to educate, train, and certify individuals with disabilities. This initiative aims to enhance teacher competency and promote sign language proficiency through expert-led training and the development of a sign language application.
- A memorandum of understanding has been established between the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Education. This agreement facilitates the enrollment of students from institutes for the blind into vocational high schools, computer institutes, and fine arts institutes. The objective is to equip these students with sign language interpretation skills, addressing communication barriers they face in society and the media.

- Additionally, a memorandum has been signed with the Ministry of Education to integrate deaf students into industrial high schools, promoting inclusive education. Special focus is given to teacher training, particularly in Duhok province. And also Nineteen people have undergone training in sign language to assist deaf individuals in various government offices.

Facilitating Sign Language Support through Collaboration:

- The Ministry of Labor, in collaboration with the German Consulate in Erbil, is initiating a dedicated project to teach sign language to the deaf community. Funding for this project is provided by the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Classes will be conducted four days a week, aiming to empower the deaf in their interactions within government offices.
- For the first time in the Kurdistan Region, sign language lessons are being recorded and made available on the ministry's websites, as well as on other organizational platforms and social media channels. This initiative aims to make sign language education accessible to a wider audience.
- Collaboration with media outlets is underway to ensure the presence of sign language interpreters during the broadcasting of major news events and popular programs. This measure is designed to ensure that the deaf community has access to important news and information.
- An innovative application has been developed to introduce citizens to sign language, promoting broader awareness and understanding of this vital communication tool.

Providing Employment Opportunities for Individuals with Disabilities in the Public Sector:

Currently, there are approximately 13,249 individuals with disabilities employed within the public sector. However, recruitment in the public sector has been halted due to the prevailing financial crisis. Consequently, specific directives are needed within the private sector to facilitate their employment, along with a defined allocation of budgetary resources aimed at providing job opportunities for them.

In order to equip individuals with disabilities with the necessary skills for employment, the Ministry has entered into a memorandum of understanding agreements with various organizations. These agreements aim to establish training courses across diverse fields, enabling citizens to access job opportunities. Special consideration is given to women with disabilities, ensuring they receive maximum employment opportunities upon completion of these courses.

Providing Housing and Health Services for Individuals with Disabilities:

The Ministry of Reconstruction is dedicated to ensuring housing accessibility for individuals with disabilities. Following a request from the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs to the Council of Ministers, approval was granted, prompting the Prime Minister to instruct the Investment Board to execute the decision and undertake necessary measures. Consequently, the Ministry of Reconstruction and Housing has committed to earmarking 3% of the 9,000 housing units planned for construction to accommodate individuals with disabilities.

Providing Healthcare Services for Disabilities:

Furthermore, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs advocated for the implementation of legislation safeguarding the rights of individuals with disabilities to access free health services. A letter was dispatched to the Council of Ministers to address this issue, particularly focusing on providing essential health services, notably for autistic patients, within health centers.

Providing Services for People with Autism:

Throughout the ninth cabinet of the Kurdistan Regional Government, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs has remained dedicated to establishing and enhancing autism centers to cater to the needs of children with autism. This includes:

- Refurbishing the Erbil Autism Center.
- Collaborating with the European Union and the Ministry of Planning to construct an autism hospital in the Sharazoor region.
- Inaugurating the Himat Autism Center in Darbandikhan to provide training for children with autism.
- Establishing an Autism Center in Koya.
- Launching an autism center in Hajiawa to address the area's pressing needs and alleviate the burden on families with autistic children.
- Introducing an autism and fitness center for children with disabilities in Halabja.
- Ensuring free medical services for individuals with autism at public hospitals through coordination between the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Health.
- Issuing special guidelines by the Ministry of Transportation for the airports of the Kurdistan Region to assist families of children with autism during airport procedures, aiming to better serve this community.

Statistics of disabled patients in the Kurdistan Region

Table 30 Number and type of disability

Number of disabled patients in the Kurdistan Region			
Type of disability disease	The total	Type of Disability Disease	The total
The Blind	10771	Autism	399
Cerebral Palsy	8342	Thalassemia	1549
Paralysis	3825	Hemophilia	221
Disability without legs	0	Bircoll	10875
The Deaf	3534	Schizophrenia	3490
Unsophisticated	4	Down	2409

Short Physical Stature	982	Deaf (deaf and dumb)	2997
Physical disabilities	27262	Unpaid Physicist	0
Psychological	38	Paid Physical	312
Diabetes Mellitus	93		

Act on Corrections Administration:

The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs has formulated a proposed legislation concerning correctional directorates within the Kurdistan Region, which has been submitted to the Council for consideration.

In alignment with the Kurdistan Regional Government's Human Rights Plan and the development of a comprehensive national policy on reform management, a substantive workshop was convened in Erbil from February 4-8, 2024. This workshop facilitated robust discussions and collaboration among representatives from pertinent stakeholders.

Legal and Social Support for Juveniles:

A collaborative initiative, supported by UNICEF, is underway in women's and juvenile prisons across Erbil, Sulaimani, and Duhok. As part of this endeavor, a team of legal professionals has been engaged to oversee judicial proceedings, ensuring timely resolution of cases. Furthermore, researchers have been dispatched to the homes of incarcerated individuals' relatives, fostering ongoing communication with families and identifying and addressing any familial challenges.

Under the same project, comprehensive training and vocational courses are regularly conducted for juveniles and children within correctional facilities. These courses encompass a range of practical skills such as carpentry, mobile phone repair, electrical work, and blacksmithing.

Aligned with the regulations outlined in the Kurdistan Regional Government Social Reform Office Regulation No. (1) In 2008, the General Directorate of Social Reform actively organized an array of support services. These include training sessions, provision of healthcare, facilitation of prisoner release, organization of communal activities such as book readings and family visits, and establishment of communication channels between prisoners and their families via mobile phones and social networks. Moreover, educational, legal, and social support is provided specifically tailored to juveniles through specialized training workshops.

Upon release, individuals receive continued care and support from the General Directorate of Social Rehabilitation, which includes financial assistance of approximately \$1,000, coordinated in collaboration with relevant organizations, to aid in their reintegration process.

Table 31 Statistics of activities in reforms in the Kurdistan Region

Matter	Number
Total prisoners in all (6) correctional facilities in the region	5427
Number of students in all reforms in the region from primary to university	402 Students
Health services for prisoners (visits to hospitals)	54331
Convicts visiting the library	62252
Working of convicts in correctional facilities	599
Permission to go home to convicts	287
Family viewing	5716
Courses and Training (Staff - Convicts)	105 Course
Seminars and Workshops (Employees - Convicts)	276
Conditional release	1171 Convicted
The person sentenced to diaphaneity	443

Diverse Initiatives of the Corrections Directorate:

- Inauguration of the Adult Correctional Directorate in Garmian.
- Waiving tuition fees for incarcerated students enrolled in public and private universities and colleges across the Kurdistan Region.
- Enhancement of monthly allowances for correctional departments.
- Provision of free medical services, including surgeries, cesarean sections, and cardiac treatments, to prisoners within Kurdistan Regional Government prisons.
- Recruitment of 60 contracted guards for adult correctional directorates in Erbil, Sulaimani, and Duhok provinces.
- Development of plans to establish a training academy dedicated to training correctional officers.
- Arrangement of screenings of films and theatrical performances in all prisons.
- Ongoing visits by researchers to the families of incarcerated individuals across all prison facilities.
- Provision of legal assistance to prisoners and detainees, including access to free legal representation, in all correctional facilities.
- Regular visits and case follow-ups by legal personnel to incarcerated individuals across relevant locations within correctional facilities.

- Establishment of a psychiatric treatment center at the Duhok Adult Correctional Directorate facilitated in collaboration with the Presidency of Duhok University.
- Advancement of construction work on the Erbil Women's Correctional Directorate building is currently at 58% completion.
- Construction of a training hall at the Erbil Women and Children Correctional Directorate, supported by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).
- Construction of a training and activity hall at the office of the General Directorate of Corrections, with assistance from UNICEF.
- Implementation of the 2023 plan outlined by the General Directorate of Corrections, reaching 72% completion despite budgetary constraints, a high prisoner population, and existing deficiencies in prison infrastructure.

Mitigating Overcrowding in Correctional Facilities:

The General Directorate of Social Reforms remains committed to alleviating overcrowding within correctional facilities through various initiatives, including the construction of new infrastructure. These efforts are outlined as follows:

- Implementation of the construction project for the new Erbil Women and Children Correctional Facility is currently underway. This project, entrusted to a contracting company, carries a budget of 1,480,701,000 dinars and is projected to be completed within 365 days.
- Approval has been granted for the construction of a new adult correctional facility in Erbil, specifically designed to accommodate 5000 individuals, including those convicted of terrorism and facing execution.
- Land allocation and approval have been secured for the construction of women's correctional facilities in Duhok and Sulaimani, as well as juvenile correctional facilities in Erbil, Duhok, and Sulaimani.
- Expansion works have been initiated in other correctional facilities to enlarge prisoner halls and staff quarters in accordance with capacity requirements and available space.
- On June 11, 2023, the Council of Ministers endorsed the establishment of the Directorate of Corrections for Adults under the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs in the Garman Administration.
- Approval has been granted for the construction of women's correctional facilities in Duhok and Sulaimani, alongside juvenile correctional facilities in Erbil, Duhok, and Sulaimani.

Table 32 Implemented Rates of Construction of Correctional Buildings for Women and Children

Construction of Women and Children Correctional Building in Erbil	
The Year 2021 - 2022	Implemented by 26%
The Year 2023	Implemented by 86%

Addressing Drug-related Issues:

In 2023, a total of 1,097 drug-related cases were recorded across all prisons in the Kurdistan Region. Among these, 480 cases involved individuals engaged in drug trafficking, while 617 cases pertained to individuals struggling with drug addiction. Notably, all cases involved male individuals. Of the total, 557 convicts benefited from various activities tailored specifically for drug addicts.

Establishment of an Addiction Treatment Center:

In accordance with Law No. (1) of 2020, which addresses drug-related offenses and their mental impacts, there is a mandated distinction between drug addicts and other prisoners. To fulfill this requirement, the Kurdistan Regional Government has designated a site for the establishment of an addiction treatment center in the Shaqlawa district. Presently, preparations are underway in collaboration with the Ministry of Health to furnish this center with the necessary resources.

On February 29, 2024, a rehabilitation center catering to drug users and addicts was inaugurated in Sulaimani province. This significant milestone was achieved with the support and collaboration of the Sulaimani General Directorate of Health.

Promoting Awareness Campaigns of Drug and Psychoactive Substance Risks:

- The Director General of Corrections has established an agreement with the Union of Islamic Religious Scholars and the Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs to deliver religious sermons to prisoners, including those battling drug addiction. These efforts aim to facilitate their rehabilitation and successful reintegration into society.
- To combat the scourge of drugs and psychotropic substances, training and rehabilitation courses have been initiated for drug addicts within correctional departments, with collaboration from civil society organizations and universities. Several drug offenders have benefited from these programs.
- Seminars are being organized for individuals who have undergone drug treatment, focusing on restoring their mental and economic well-being following substance abuse. These seminars serve to educate citizens about the perils associated with drugs and psychotropic substances.
- In coordination with the International Labor Organization, 20,000 leaflets have been printed to disseminate information among workers regarding their rights, particularly concerning labor rights awareness.

Establishing Working Conditions for Minors:

In alignment with the regulations stipulated in the Labor Code, labor inspectors conduct routine visits to workplaces to enforce the provisions governing the minimum age for employment. Their primary responsibility is to ensure compliance with legal requirements concerning child labor.

- According to the Labor Code, a juvenile worker is defined as an individual who has reached the age of 15 but has not yet reached adulthood.
- Moreover, the Labor Law of the region mandates that the minimum age for employment is set at 15 years.

In response to the pressing issue of unaccompanied children engaged in street work, the Ministry has taken proactive measures. A memorandum of understanding has been established between the Ministry and the Kurdistan Child Protection Organization to oversee and monitor these vulnerable children. The collaboration aims to identify sustainable solutions to address this prevalent phenomenon effectively.

Protecting the Rights of Foreign Workers:

Foreign workers within the region are entitled to the same labor rights as citizens. This commitment is evident in their protection, securing of social security benefits, and thorough investigation of any grievances or complaints they may encounter.

To ensure the effective regulation of foreign labor, a high-level committee has been established, comprising representatives from relevant ministries. This committee is dedicated to addressing the specific needs and concerns of foreign workers.

Following consultations with labor market stakeholders and employers, comprehensive drafts and labor regulations have been developed and presented in meetings convened for this purpose, such as Meeting Number 125.

Stringent measures have been implemented to regulate the employment practices of foreign workers. Legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms are meticulously applied to govern their recruitment, employment terms, activities, and address any related disputes or incidents.

Categorization of Individuals with Disabilities in the Labor Market:

The General Directorate of Labor and Social Security is actively engaged in compiling comprehensive statistics regarding individuals with disabilities within the labor market. This initiative encompasses gathering data on various parameters including age, gender, disability type, employment rates, distribution across different companies, and the nature of their occupations.

Supervision of Children in Juvenile Facilities:

Efforts are underway by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs to oversee the welfare of children accompanying their mothers in correctional facilities. For children not facing charges, the ministry endeavors to facilitate their reintegration with relatives or, in accordance with social welfare guidelines, arrange accommodation in designated boys' and girls' units within the facilities.

Table 33 Number of Beneficiaries Social Welfare in Orphanages by City

Beneficiaries of cells from birth to 15 years	
City	The beneficiary
Erbil	113
Sulaimani	115
Duhok	204
Garmian	21
The total	453

Table 34 Number of Social Welfare Beneficiaries in Regional Kindergartens by City

Beneficiaries of nurseries	
City	The beneficiary
Erbil	2735
Sulaimani	2976
Duhok	432
Ranya	52
Zakho	54
Halabja	33
Garmian	178
The total	6460

Steps toward Safeguarding Children's Rights:

- The Juvenile Justice Project is nearing its completion, representing a significant step forward in ensuring the protection of children's rights.
- In accordance with the Personal Status Act, fathers who are separated from their children now have expanded visitation rights. Formerly limited to two visits per month, these rights have been extended to allow fathers (or mothers) to spend up to 24 hours per week with their children. Additionally, individuals who feel their visitation rights are being infringed upon can seek legal recourse to have their grievances addressed.
- The provision of appropriate interview facilities is ensured through collaboration with the Ministry of Municipalities and Tourism, ensuring a conducive environment for child welfare assessments.
- Preliminary approval for a policy aimed at safeguarding children's rights has been obtained from the Council of Ministers, documented under Writing No. (5437) dated 7/5/2023. This comprehensive policy, encompassing eight core themes, addresses various aspects of children's welfare, including healthcare, education, and judiciary, within the Kurdistan Regional Government.

Child Healthcare:

The Ministry of Health offers comprehensive healthcare services for children, beginning from birth in hospitals. These services include the administration of necessary vaccines and ongoing monitoring of children's growth and development through regular check-ups at health centers. Additionally, the ministry ensures the maintenance of children's nutritional well-being, emphasizing the importance of a healthy diet.

Family Planning Program:

The family planning program is designed to support women following childbirth, with the objective of preventing unintended pregnancies. This program aims to safeguard maternal and child health by reducing the risks associated with frequent pregnancies, thereby lowering maternal and infant mortality rates.

Providing Housing Units for Women and Unaccompanied Children:

The Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) has sanctioned the allocation of 20,000 housing units specifically designated for women and orphans, facilitated through the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs. This initiative addresses two key scenarios:

Firstly, for unaccompanied children reaching the age of 18, they are provided housing support until the age of 24. This assistance aims to enable them to establish their own families, pursue careers, and achieve self-sufficiency as they transition into adulthood.

Secondly, housing assistance is extended to women who have experienced violence and sought refuge in women's shelters. Despite resolving their issues, if these women are unable to return to their families and face homelessness, support is provided. Many of these women may have children in their care, further emphasizing the importance of this housing assistance initiative.

Women's Shelters and Accommodation:

In the Kurdistan Region, there are currently five shelters dedicated to providing refuge for women facing threats, as well as one shelter specifically tailored to support victims of human trafficking. To enhance support services and ensure comprehensive care for vulnerable women, it is recommended to augment the number of specialized shelters. Furthermore, efforts should be directed towards the rehabilitation of victims, with a focus on facilitating their successful reintegration into society.

Collaboration with the Federal Government:

- The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs has entered into an employment agreement with its counterpart in the Federal Government's Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs.

- Both Ministries of Labor and Social Affairs from the Kurdistan Regional Government and the Iraqi Government have jointly approved a Memorandum of Understanding, along with the draft policies on occupational inspection and occupational safety and health measures.
- Collaboration is established with the General Directorate of Occupational Health and Safety in Baghdad to leverage the expertise of the National Center for Occupational Health and Safety within the Baghdad Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs. This partnership aims to enhance the capacity of workers in the region concerning occupational health and safety practices.
- A unified policy to combat or mitigate child labor is being developed jointly by the Federal Government and the Kurdistan Regional Government, with support from the International Labor Organization.
- Strengthened partnerships are being fostered with all branches of the Federal Iraqi Government, particularly with the Ministries of Justice and Social Affairs, which directly influence the operations of the General Directorate of Social Reform.

Collaboration with International Parties and Organizations:

- Engaging with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) on training and vocational projects within urban and rural areas, along with the formulation of comprehensive plans and initiatives.
- Joint efforts with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to develop and implement a national strategic plan for persons with disabilities. This collaboration extends to supporting the Disabled Council, gathering data on individuals with disabilities, and fostering livelihood opportunities for this demographic within the Kurdistan Region.
- Partnering with the Solidarity Center to bolster support for the working class and trade unions, focusing on artistic endeavors and conducting various awareness-raising activities, specialized courses, and campaigns to enhance workers' awareness and safety practices.
- Collaboration with the International Medical Corps to deliver training sessions on child protection, case management, and other relevant topics to employees and researchers within the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs.
- Signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Kurdistan Child Protection Organization to combat child labor and strengthen societal capacity for overall child protection, particularly among child laborers, across Erbil, Sulaimani, and Duhok provinces.
- Implementing projects in collaboration with the World Food Program (WFP), wherein financial assistance totaling 750 million dinars is allocated to equip vocational training directorates in Erbil, Sulaimani, and Duhok, alongside the provision of training courses for beneficiaries and instructors.
- Initiating joint projects targeting 3,200 impoverished families in Duhok, selected based on poverty thresholds, in partnership with the Ministries of Labor, Social Affairs, and Planning in the Kurdistan Regional Government, as well as the Federal Government, World Bank, WFP, and UNICEF.

Implementation of Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs Recommendations:

Following a series of workshops and roundtable discussions, the Office of the Coordinator for International Advocacy has outlined specific measures. These directives, mandated by the Office of the Prime Minister, have been disseminated to relevant stakeholders, including the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs.

About Initiatives Targeting Domestic Violence Eradication:

- Women residing in shelters, whose safety is not compromised, are slated for training, qualification, supervision, and subsequent employment by government entities upon reaching adulthood.
- Incidents of violence against women and children reported within correctional facilities are promptly communicated to the Prosecutor General's office for further investigation and appropriate action.

About Eradicating Torture and Ill-Treatment:

- Intensified efforts are imperative to alleviate prison overcrowding, with a focus on incorporating the construction of new prison facilities aligned with international standards into the operational agendas and initiatives of relevant entities. Consideration should be given to the classification of penalties during this process.
- The establishment of medical care units within all correctional facilities falls under the purview of healthcare initiatives, aiming to ensure adequate medical attention and services for incarcerated individuals.
- Incidents of violations or complaints falling within the jurisdiction of the Correctional and Prison Administration Unit are promptly communicated to the prosecutor general for appropriate investigation and action.

Addressing Upholding Freedom of Expression and Access to Information:

- Emphasize vocational training initiatives in translation services, aimed at enhancing skill sets and employment opportunities for individuals. Additionally, prioritize the expansion of sign language instruction programs to cater to the needs of individuals with disabilities.
- Expand the network of disability centers across the region, with a particular focus on establishing facilities tailored to the needs of the deaf and hard-of-hearing community. These centers serve as vital resources for support, education, and empowerment within the disability community.

About Correctional Facility and Detention Center Management:

- Prioritize the construction of prison facilities in accordance with established geometric and architectural standards, ensuring accessibility for individuals with disabilities in the engineering design phase. Additionally, consider locating prisons away from residential areas and refrain from constructing large halls to accommodate large inmate populations, thus safeguarding health and security concerns.
- Implement a comprehensive classification system for inmates and detainees within prisons, correctional facilities, and detention centers. This classification process should take into account various factors such as the nature of their crimes, sentencing, age, gender, legal status, risk level, health status, and social background. Such categorization efforts are instrumental in devising tailored individualized training programs.
- Guarantee that individuals in custody are held in supervised environments, with provisions allowing detainees regular access to their families and legal counsel. It is imperative that legal representatives are promptly informed of the detainee's status and precise location of detention.
- Enhance the functionality of the alternative family system, particularly in Erbil and Duhok provinces, to provide viable alternatives to conventional custodial arrangements.
- Ensure that individuals with disabilities suspected of criminal activity receive appropriate support and accommodations tailored to their specific needs during the detention period.
- Inform the relatives of prisoners and detainees about the Complaints Committee's contact information, facilitating the submission of complaints through electronic platforms or direct telephone channels.

Addressing Combating Human Trafficking:

- Establishing specialized shelters designed to provide safe accommodation for victims of human trafficking, ensuring their security and well-being.
- Sustain efforts to advocate for and support shelters dedicated to at-risk women, including those who are victims of trafficking, serving as safe havens for individuals in need of protection.
- Conduct training programs for shelter staff to enhance their capabilities in effectively assisting and supporting trafficking victims, ensuring they receive appropriate care and assistance.
- Ensure foreign workers have designated representatives to oversee their welfare and safeguard them from the risks of human trafficking, thus providing an additional layer of protection and support.

Addressing Drugs and Psychotropic Substances:

- Implement measures to segregate drug dealers from victims within correctional facilities, ensuring distinct treatment and rehabilitation pathways.
- Prioritize the rehabilitation of victims and allocate separate accommodations for users and convicts, tailored to their specific needs.
- Incorporate considerations for the unique needs and psychosocial circumstances of drug users into reform initiatives, recognizing the complexity of their situation.
- Utilize individuals who have undergone addiction treatment to share their experiences, educating youth about the dangers of drugs and promoting prevention efforts.
- Establish comprehensive awareness courses at an advanced level for social and psychological researchers, equipping them with the knowledge and skills necessary to address drug-related issues effectively.

Ministry of Culture and Youth

Out of the (2) recommendations submitted to the Ministry of Culture and Youth in 2022, (1) recommendation has been implemented and (1) recommendation has not been implemented. Compared to 2023, the number of implemented recommendations is (1) recommendation, and the number of recommendations that have not been implemented has increased to (1) recommendation. In this regard the implementation rate becomes (75%)

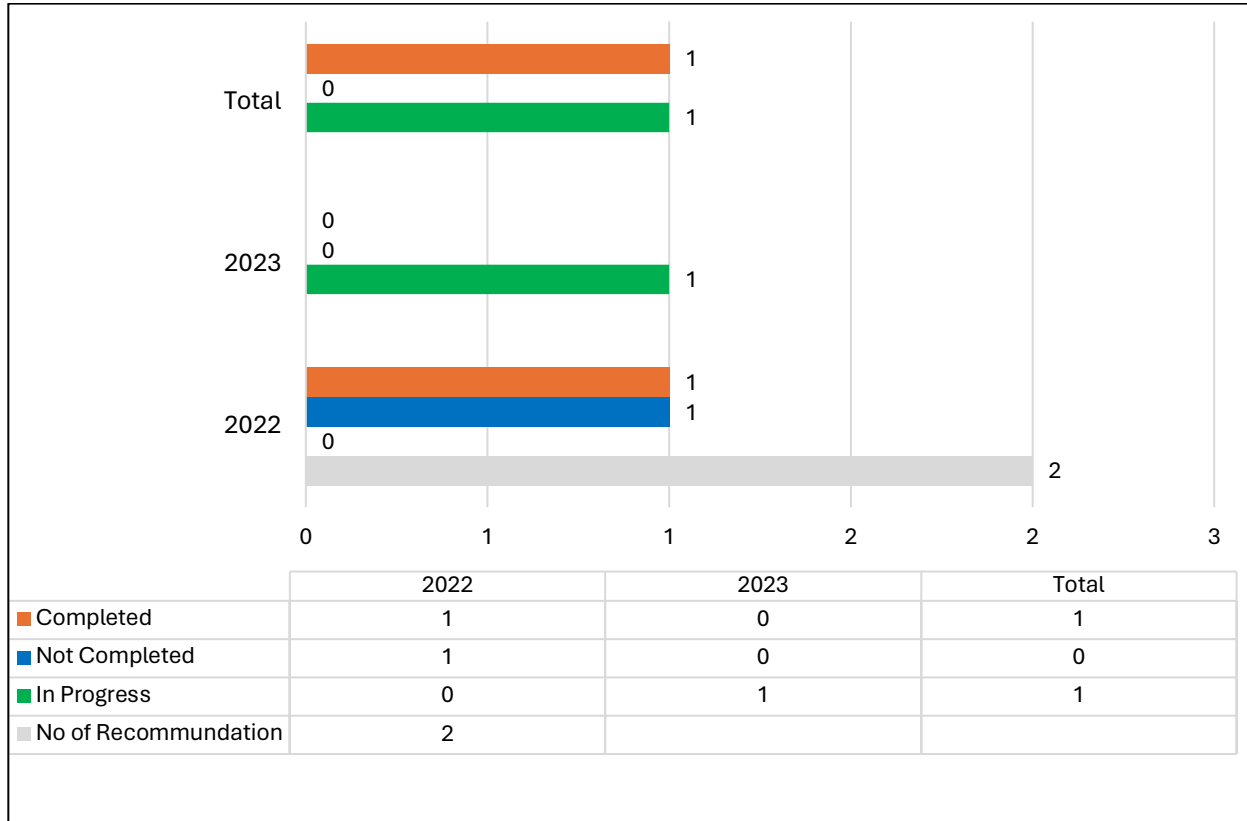


Figure 41: Implementation of Recommendations Related to the Ministry of Culture and Youth

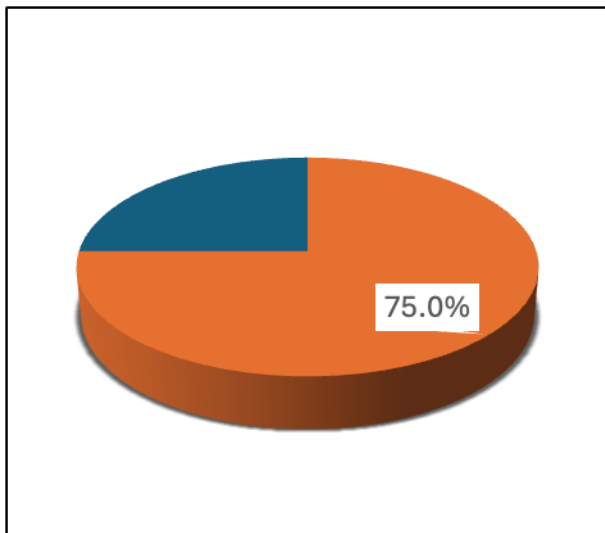


Figure-42 Rates of recommendation execution for 2022-2023

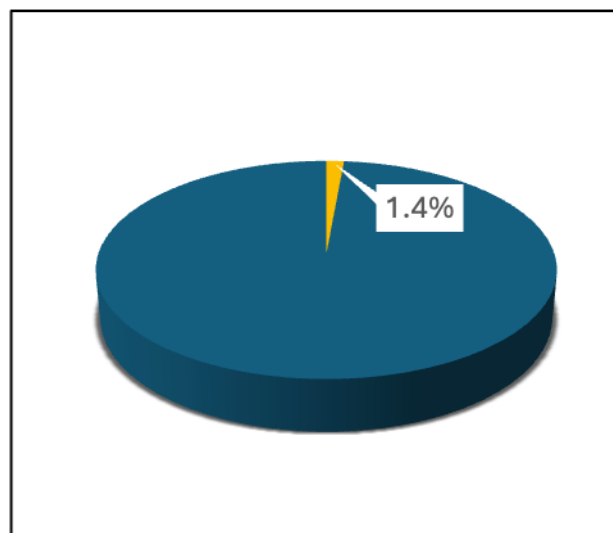


Figure-43 Effort rate of the ministry to completed the recommendations

Implemented Recommendations

1. Foster a milieu of inclusivity, reverence for others, and acceptance, emblematic of citizenship principles and appreciation for heterogeneity, through heightened governmental initiatives in collaboration with civil society entities. These endeavors seek to proliferate a human rights ethos via educational endeavors, with active involvement from national bodies and civil society groups.

Unmet Recommendations

1. Advocate for the establishment of essential initiatives and amplify endeavors to enhance societal understanding regarding the hazards associated with trafficking and the consumption of drugs and psychotropic substances.

Below are the measures, laws, guidelines, procedures, and practical steps taken in implementing the international recommendations:

Relevant Legislation Regarding Journalism

- The Journalism Law No. 35 of 2007 elucidates the responsibilities and entitlements of journalists and media professionals.
- The Press Law in the Kurdistan Region No. 10 of 1993 was promulgated.

Mechanism of freedom of the press

- The Ministry of Culture and Youth, in collaboration with the Kurdistan Union of Journalists, has established a committee to address the operations of media establishments.
- The Ministry of Interior, alongside the Kurdistan Union of Journalists, has drafted a memorandum of understanding to streamline journalistic endeavors in compliance with legal frameworks.

License for Operation and Broadcasting

- The Ministry of Culture and Youth has issued Instruction No. (1) of 2023 pertaining to media operations within the Kurdistan Region, aimed at regulating the frequency of radio and television broadcasts. Concomitantly, Reality No. (305) of 2023 concerning Electronic Media and Commercial Advertising was introduced, emphasizing the promotion of a culture of inclusivity, non-discrimination, and the eradication of divisive rhetoric.
- In alignment with the imperative of fostering a conducive media environment, the Ministry of Culture and Youth promulgated Directive No. (1) of 2023 on media operations in the Kurdistan Region. However, acknowledging the paramount importance of upholding principles such as freedom of expression, press freedom, and uninhibited media activity, it was deemed necessary to revert to the implementation of Directive No. (1) of 2014, which governs the regulation of broadcasting frequencies within the Kurdistan Region.

- Presently, the Kurdistan Region has granted licenses to 144 television channels, comprising 36 satellite channels and 108 local channels. Additionally, 155 radio stations have been authorized to operate and disseminate content.
- Furthermore, the Kurdistan Region boasts a vibrant media landscape, wherein numerous newspapers, magazines, and online platforms operate freely, contributing to the pluralistic discourse and information dissemination within the region.

Directive from the Ministry of Culture and Youth

The Ministry of Culture and Youth has promulgated directives concerning the management of radio and television frequencies, the authorization of radio broadcasting entities, oversight of electronic media, and the control of commercial advertising. These directives are aligned with the promotion of a climate of harmonious cohabitation, the prevention of discriminatory practices, and the eradication of injurious discourse. They are delineated as follows:

In 2020

The Ministry of Culture and Youth enacted the following directives and guidelines through administrative decree No. 546 on 22/6/2020:

- It is advised that the identities of minors not be disclosed during the airing of philanthropic initiatives, even with parental consent.
- Emphasis is placed on safeguarding the dignity and rights of economically disadvantaged individuals, ensuring they are not subjected to social embarrassment. Consequently, measures should be taken to obscure the faces of such individuals or their families.
- Only the first names of recipients of charitable aid should be disclosed.
- Procedures for establishing bank accounts for beneficiaries of assistance programs are to be implemented.
- Monies are not to be solicited or accepted from media outlets for any purpose related to charitable endeavors.
- Channels broadcasting charitable programs are encouraged to prominently display bank account details of low-income recipients both visually and audibly during program transmissions.

In 2023:

- On May 6th, 2023, the General Directorate of Information and Printing and Publishing dispatched correspondence under reference number (908) to the Ministry's office, prompting a subsequent communication, referenced as a letter (3216) on June 13th, 2023, directed to the Council of Ministers/Presidency of the Office. This correspondence aimed at the structuring and enhancement of charitable programming aired through audiovisual media. Additionally, paragraph (A) of point (22) of Article 4 of Directive No. (1) of 2023 delineates the media's responsibilities within the Kurdistan Region. Consequent to this directive, corrective measures were undertaken against several channels found in violation, with appropriate legal actions initiated against them.

- Correspondence bearing reference number (1825), dated November 22nd, 2023, was specifically geared towards charitable programming and underscored the imperative of adhering to the prescribed guidelines.
- Instruction No. (1) of 2023 was promulgated to govern media operations within the Kurdistan Region, encompassing the regulation of radio and television frequencies, electronic media, and commercial advertising. These guidelines are intrinsically linked to the propagation of a culture of inclusivity, non-discrimination, and the eradication of rhetoric detrimental to communal harmony and coexistence.

Integration of Sign Language in Media Representation

Pursuant to the international guidelines concerning the incorporation of sign language, communication protocol No. (12) dated 2/1/2023 was disseminated among all visual media platforms, specifically television networks, stipulating the utilization of sign language, notably during news broadcasts.

Regrettably, no discernible compliance has been observed among media entities thus far, with explanations for non-compliance remaining undisclosed. Consequently, the Ministry of Culture and Youth intend to dispatch correspondence in 2024, reiterating the imperative nature of incorporating sign language in media broadcasts.

To adhere to the human rights principles outlined in the Kurdistan Regional Government's Human Rights Plan recommendations, the Ministry of Culture and Youth has issued the following directives to the media:

- It is imperative that programming on respective channels takes into account the psychological well-being and circumstances of economically disadvantaged, vulnerable, and ailing individuals. Neglecting this consideration would constitute a violation of fundamental human rights.
- It is recommended to designate a dedicated interpreter for sign language during a daily one-hour segment, particularly during news broadcasts.
- Refrain from airing commercial advertisements that have a detrimental impact on family dynamics and societal harmony, particularly those that perpetuate negative stereotypes and undermine the status of women.
- Cease coverage of child begging activities, in adherence to the rights outlined for children and the dignity of their families as stipulated in the 1989 Convention on Rights of Child and relevant UNICEF principles.
- Exercise discretion in broadcasting content involving violence, homicide, and individuals under legal scrutiny, refraining from publicizing their statements prior to court rulings and avoiding undue emphasis on social maladies.
- It has been communicated to audiovisual channels to foster awareness among young audiences regarding the repercussions associated with the misuse of communication technologies.

- Visual media outlets are cautioned against the dissemination of graphic imagery depicting women who have suffered violent acts, recognizing the need to uphold their dignity and respect.
- Media access to correctional facilities and the public airing of such visits are to be prohibited, in alignment with overarching human rights principles and international agreements.
- The publication of information concerning discovered or abandoned minors on local channels is discouraged, as it runs counter to the tenets outlined in the Juvenile Welfare Act, and such news dissemination shall not be endorsed.
- Pursuant to the guidance provided by the Prosecutor General of the Public Rights Board through correspondence numbered 208 on 9/3/2021 and 242 on 16/3/2021,
- In accordance with directives from the Prosecutor General of the Public Rights Board, as communicated in letters numbered (208) on 9/3/2021 and No. 242 on 16/3/2021, the broadcast of culturally incongruent programs on channels is discouraged due to their potential societal harm and disruption to familial structures.

Notices disseminated to the media in 2023:

- In correspondence marked as Letter No. (1175) dated 25/7/2023, it has come to our attention that certain channels and online platforms have aired advertisements pertaining to gambling activities, a matter falling under the purview of cybercrime. Furthermore, these platforms have showcased inappropriate foreign products and films. In accordance with Directive No. (1) issued by the Ministry of Culture and Youth in 2023 concerning media operations, efforts have been initiated to address this concern through the establishment of a committee comprising relevant stakeholders.
- Letter No. (638) dated 8/6/2022, directed to all media entities, refers to the communication from the Media and Information Office marked as No. (29) dated 29/5/2022. This communication urges a cessation of coverage regarding criminal incidents such as murder and arson. Such coverage has been deemed potentially contributory to the encouragement of criminal behavior among citizens.
- Under the auspices of Letter No. (2817) dated 9/6/2022, it is recommended that brief advertisements, encompassing textual content and imagery, be disseminated across all channels. The objective is to foster societal awareness regarding pertinent issues such as environmental conservation, social consciousness, violence prevention, and familial challenges, as well as addressing matters concerning murder, suicide, drug abuse, and the misuse of communication devices.
- Letter No. (766) dated 12/2/2023, originating from the Ministry of Culture and Youth, refers to correspondence from the Ministry of Interior pertaining to the initiation of a community awareness campaign aimed at curbing incidents of domestic violence through media channels. Specific emphasis is placed on promoting the utilization of the (safe you) application and the hotline number (119) as integral components of this campaign.

Citizen outreach initiatives through vignettes and concise visual presentations.

In adherence to global directives concerning regional development, efforts have been made to incorporate these recommendations into outreach endeavors aimed at elucidating pertinent issues relevant to public welfare. Up to the year 2024, approximately 42 vignettes and concise visual presentations have been crafted and disseminated across various platforms including:

- The distribution of precise news and information through media channels, promotion of child and family well-being, mitigation of escalating health concerns and environmental degradation, containment of expenses stemming from plastic bag consumption, promotion of indigenous goods and support for agricultural producers, emphasis on local resources and water reservoir preservation, advocacy for gender equality and prevention of violence against women, safeguarding the rights of individuals with disabilities, and implementation of measures to curtail road accidents.

Raising awareness regarding the perils associated with drug trafficking and the consumption of narcotics and psychotropic substances.

- The Ministry of Culture and Youth has communicated, through both the General Directorate of Youth and the General Directorate of Media and Publishing, the implementation of initiatives aimed at countering drug-related issues.
- The General Directorate of Youth in the Kurdistan Region executes its endeavors through (8) Youth Directorates situated across provinces and autonomous administrations in the Kurdistan Region. These directorates oversee (48) sports and youth centers throughout the region, comprising (14) centers in Erbil, (11) centers in Sulaimani, (10) centers in Duhok, (1) center in Halabja, (3) centers in Garmian, (2) centers in Raperin, (5) centers in Soran, and (2) centers in Zakho.

Establishment of the Strategic Framework for the General Directorate of Youth

1. Initiation of a comprehensive regional survey targeting youth and adolescents, focusing on substance usage, in collaboration with the Regional Statistical Board. This endeavor aims to formulate a meticulously researched and efficacious strategic blueprint, agenda, and trajectory.
2. Implementation of sustained awareness initiatives across the spectrum of the General Directorate of Youth, provincial youth directorates, autonomous administrations, and all regional sports and youth centers. These efforts will be orchestrated in concert with relevant stakeholders, media outlets, and social media platforms.
3. Deployment of anti-narcotic task forces within the General Directorate of Youth, Provincial Youth Directorates, and autonomous administrations, tasked with monitoring illicit substance activities and disseminating knowledge concerning the psychological and physiological perils associated with substance abuse. These actions will be conducted in close collaboration with pertinent stakeholders, accompanied by the preparation of comprehensive annual reports.

4. Introduction of diverse educational programs within sports and youth centers, integrating comprehensive substance awareness materials.
5. Organization of annual conferences addressing substance dependency at both the regional level and within the purview of the General Directorate of Youth, convening relevant stakeholders for constructive dialogue and deliberation.
6. Establishment of urban and suburban consortiums aimed at disseminating intelligence on youth conditions and the perils of substance abuse, fostering exchange and discourse among young individuals regarding the battle against narcotics.
7. Delivery of symposiums and training sessions highlighting the intricacies of substance misuse and its multifaceted perils within recent intervals at athletic facilities and youth hubs, encompassing psychological, physical, and societal ramifications alongside legal repercussions.
8. Collaboration with pertinent stakeholders including UN entities, international bodies, and local establishments to counter-narcotics and mitigate associated hazards.
9. Creation of succinct cinematic productions to instill awareness among youth cohorts, effectively combating the pernicious effects of substance abuse, with scheduled showcase during the annual youth gala.
10. Deployment and instruction of (2) educators for each sport and youth establishment, dedicated to enlightening youth on the pitfalls of substance dependence.
11. Endeavors should be undertaken to enlist a subject matter authority to assume pedagogical duties, delivering lectures, orchestrating seminars, and overseeing enlightenment initiatives concerning the psychological and physiological perils of drug utilization within sports and youth facilities.
12. Institution of youth assemblies at provincial and autonomous administrative echelons, inclusive of governmental and non-governmental entities, for strategic planning and data aggregation regarding substance abuse, pinpointing high-risk zones for governmental advisement.

Functions of the General Directorate of Media and Publishing

Operating across the Kurdistan Region, the General Directorate executes its functions through six distinct departments, namely the Directorate of Media and Publishing situated in Erbil, Sulaimani, Duhok, and Soran, alongside the Directorate of Training and Radio Newroz. Its operational responsibilities encompass:

1. Disseminating targeted media content to facilitate comprehensive awareness campaigns addressing the perils of substance abuse.
2. Commissioning specialized segments aimed at fostering drug awareness.
3. Curating and disseminating informative literature, including books and pamphlets, to elucidate the adverse effects of narcotics.
4. Producing informative posters to sensitize community members to the dangers associated with drug misuse.

5. Engaging subject matter experts and hosting informational sessions on Radio Newroz to impart essential awareness and knowledge to the public.
6. Coordinating with media outlets to broadcast complimentary advertisements targeting drug prevention efforts during nighttime slots, with multiple repetitions for heightened impact.
7. Overseeing the production of documentaries elucidating the ramifications of drug abuse and psychotropic substances.

Broadcast Media Quality Standards

Audiovisual media outlets are required to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Uphold national security and public welfare in accordance with the relevant laws of the Kurdistan Region.
- Foster social cohesion and familial unity, refraining from actions that may incite discord.
- Refrain from airing content that promotes racial discrimination, extremism, or prejudice based on religion, sect, ethnicity, or regional affiliation.
- Abstain from media practices that could precipitate economic instability or disrupt local markets.
- Avoid engaging in defamation, insults, or harassment directed at individuals or their spiritual beliefs.

Required steps to execute the directives issued by the Ministry of Culture and Youth

Following an extensive series of workshops and roundtable discussions, the Office of the Coordinator for International Advocacy has formulated precise measures, which have been communicated by the Office of the Prime Minister to pertinent stakeholders, including the Ministry of Culture and Youth.

Committed to upholding the fundamental principles of freedom of expression and ensuring access to information:

- Adherence to the guidelines concerning the execution of media responsibilities and dissemination of information within public institutions is paramount. In instances of non-compliance, swift administrative measures should be undertaken to enforce the adoption of international standards.
- Establish a streamlined mechanism to facilitate the expeditious dissemination of information in collaboration with governmental bodies. Concurrently, ascertain the rationale behind the disclosure or withholding of information from official sources, overseeing this process in partnership with the Independent Human Rights Commission, an autonomous entity.

- Intensify efforts to uphold the Right to Information Act No. 11 of 2013 in the Kurdistan Region and institute robust frameworks for its enforcement. Simultaneously, institute a coordinating committee comprising the Independent Human Rights Commission, pertinent ministries, and civil society entities to oversee the implementation of the legislation.
- Collaborate with civil society stakeholders to discern permissible and impermissible information, delineating between the content of private nature and that of public interest.
- In conjunction with the Independent Human Rights Commission, delineate the broad parameters and boundaries concerning national interest in matters pertaining to media and electronic journalism. Identify information pertinent to the Kurdistan Region's national security that warrants non-disclosure and publication restrictions.
- Undertake measures to bolster the unhindered operation of media establishments, underscoring the pivotal role of a free press in society. Ensuring the protection of journalists and individuals exercising their freedoms within the framework of the right to freedom of expression is imperative under legal statutes and governmental auspices.
- Place emphasis on regular engagement and dialogue between government officials and members of the media. In this context, designating a liaison officer within each government agency to facilitate information provision will expedite this endeavor.
- Facilitating the engagement of government agencies in the classification of information, thereby establishing distinct categories pertinent to safeguarding citizens' rights to access information.
- Ensuring alignment between domestic laws restricting freedom of expression and pertinent international human rights standards. In this context, the Kurdistan Region's Journalism Law No. 35 of 2007 would benefit from alignment with other legislative frameworks addressing freedom of expression, such as legislation concerning the misuse of electronic devices.
- Upon allegations of infringements against journalists, pertinent authorities should conduct investigations in collaboration with the Prosecutor General and the Judicial Council to ascertain the veracity of claims and disseminate findings to the public.
- The Ministry of Culture and Youth of the Kurdistan Region should oversee media outlets failing to adhere to professional and impartial standards, which may ultimately undermine political stability, social cohesion, and citizens' psychological well-being. Collaborating with the prosecutor general, legal action should be pursued against negligent individuals and entities.
- Stressing the importance of notifying spokespersons and media officers of official institutions to promptly address journalists' inquiries. In cases where obstacles impede responses, reasons for such hindrances should be transparently communicated.
- Underlining the requirement for spokespersons and media officials of official institutions to hold degrees in media studies or demonstrate endorsement from the journalists' union, substantiated by years of continuous media-related experience. The High Council of the Public Service may be tasked with overseeing this mandate within the context of organizational restructuring, as outlined in relevant job descriptions.

Committed to the eradication of human trafficking

- Engage in facilitating a nationwide campaign to raise awareness about human trafficking.

Committed to mitigating discrimination and promoting inclusivity

- Propose tailored directives aimed at governing the operations of both traditional and social media platforms, recognizing their significant roles in disseminating discriminatory narratives that undermine the functionality of governmental entities.
- Endeavor to curb the misuse of free speech, particularly when it incites violence, propagates hateful rhetoric, or perpetuates racist sentiments.
- Undertake comprehensive inquiries into the root causes behind the proliferation of discriminatory behaviors across various domains, employing rigorous analysis to identify underlying factors and engaging in constructive dialogues with media stakeholders to address them effectively.

Regarding drugs and psychotropic substances:

- Implement essential initiatives and enhance endeavors to elevate public consciousness regarding the hazards and legal repercussions associated with drug trafficking and misuse.
- Launch extensive awareness initiatives across various media platforms (visual, auditory, and textual) elucidating the detriments of drugs, strategies for combating them, and preventive measures.
- Amplify community awareness campaigns concerning the perils of drug abuse, with particular emphasis on leveraging the media and social media platforms for dissemination.
- Sustain collaborative efforts with non-governmental organizations to foster awareness among communities and youth regarding the detrimental effects of substance abuse.
- Foster coordination with pertinent governmental ministries, agencies, international bodies, UN entities, and civil society organizations to advance initiatives aimed at drug eradication, including the organization of conferences, seminars, and scholarly research endeavors on drug-related issues.

On the matter of the rights of individuals with disabilities:

- Enhance public outreach initiatives featuring the engagement of individuals with disabilities, with the objective of fostering understanding of their entitlements, eradicating discriminatory practices, and fostering their engagement in political and societal spheres.
- Ensure diligent adherence to the directive delineated in guideline number (2), dated 2/1/2023, issued by the Ministry of Culture and Youth, mandating the incorporation of sign language by all visual media outlets during news broadcasts.

Kurdistan Union of Journalists

Procedures for executing the directives outlined in the Kurdistan Regional Government's proposal for the Kurdistan Union of Journalists

Pursuant to the guidance from the Office of the International Recommendations Coordinator, the Ministry of Culture and Youth dispatched communication reference No. (6674) to the Kurdistan Union of Journalists on 10/12/2023. This correspondence seeks to elicit comprehensive insights and data concerning the status of press freedom and incidences of journalist-related violations. The objective is to procure a thorough understanding of the landscape surrounding press and media liberties, encompassing arrests, infringements upon journalists' rights, and subsequent legal actions.

Statistics Regarding Lawsuits Filed in Courts for 2023

Throughout the course of 2023, numerous legal actions were initiated against media entities, encompassing matters ranging from breaches of national security to allegations of defamation, slander, and intimidation. The Journalist's Union has taken proactive measures by furnishing legal representation to safeguard the interests of journalists and media establishments alike.

Table 35 Statistics of lawsuits filed against media outlets in 2023 for which the Union of Journalists provided lawyers

No	The media agency	Type of request	the complaining party	Resistance type	Result
1	Gav News	Compromising national security	Military entity	Defense to the end of the case	It was decided in favor of the journalist
2	Gav News	Defamation	Duhok Education	Followed up and participated in the study	It was decided in favor of the journalist
3	Gav News	Defamation	Ministry of Electricity	Defending it to the end of the case	It was decided in favor of the journalist
4	NRT Agency (Reporter)	Insults and threats	Citizen	Defending it to the end of the case	It was decided in favor of the journalist
5	NRT Agency (Cameraman)	Insults and threats	Citizen	Defending it to the end of the case	It was decided in favor of the journalist

Legal actions initiated through court filings and submissions to the prosecutor general concerning the resolution of journalists' matters:

- During the period spanning from 2021 to 2023, there were a total of 65 correspondences directed to the union, encompassing both judicial and law enforcement avenues.
- Two petitions have been submitted to the courts, delineated as follows:
 1. Request for the closure of a case involving an NRT journalist, culminating in a favorable decision rendered on September 21, 2023.
 2. Lodgment of a grievance by journalist Islam Kashani before the Zakho court.
- Additionally, two formal complaints have been presented under the purview of the Attorney General's office, without being construed as criminal indictments, specifying:
 1. A grievance lodged on behalf of NRT against the SWAT forces of the Duhok Police Directorate was forwarded to the Prosecutor General's Office/Duhok Office.
 2. A formal complaint articulated on behalf of Sepedah Channel against the SWAT forces of the Duhok Police Directorate, directed to the Prosecutor General's Office/Duhok Office.

Statistics of registered media outlets in the Kurdistan Region according to the Kurdistan Union of Journalists in 2023

- Journal (726).
- Newspaper (263).
- News website (130).

Statistics of union members in 2023

- Active Member (6910).
- Intern Member (242).
- Participating Members (2020).

Renewal of Union Members' Identification Cards Utilizing NFC Technology

In an effort to streamline the organizational structure of the Union of Journalists in 2024, it has been resolved to update the identification credentials of union members through the implementation of Near Field Communication (NFC) technology. NFC, a form of wireless communication operating within close proximity, adheres to the international standard ISO 14443 and facilitates seamless interaction with an array of electronic card terminals globally. To achieve this objective, a series of administrative protocols have been instituted, among which the following are paramount:

1. Provision of institutional assistance from the journalist's employing agency, subject to a duration not exceeding one year.
2. Submission of the journalist's most recent identification card and curriculum vitae.
3. As of March 17, 2024, over 350 journalists have completed the renewal process, comprising 309 active members, 38 associate members, and 3 apprentice members, with ongoing procedures underway.

Ministry of Martyrs and Anfal Affairs

Out of the (6) recommendations submitted to the Ministry of Martyrs and Anfal Affairs in 2022, (3) recommendations have been implemented, (2) recommendations have not been implemented and (1) recommendation was in the process of implementation. Compared to 2023, the implemented recommendations have increased to (4) recommendations and the non-implemented recommendations (2) recommendations, and all the recommendations that were in the implementation stage have been implemented. In this regard the implementation rate becomes (66.7%).

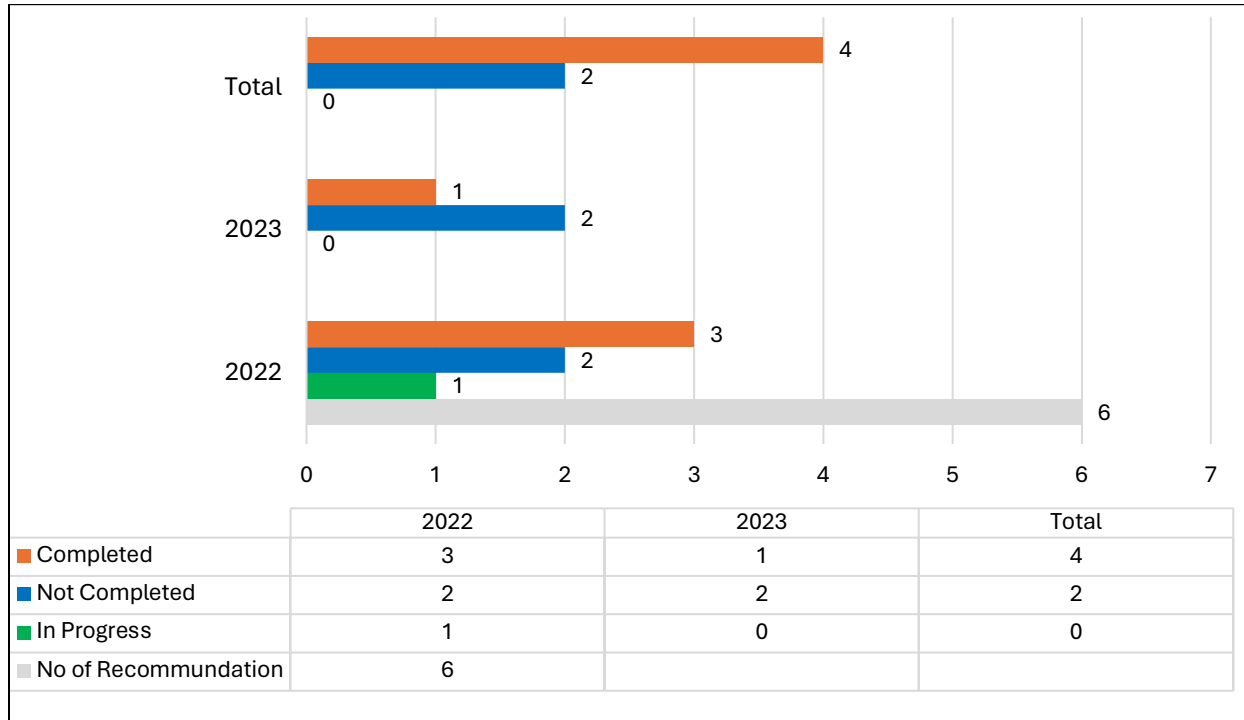


Figure 44: Implementation of Recommendations Related to the Ministry of Martrys and Anfal Affairs

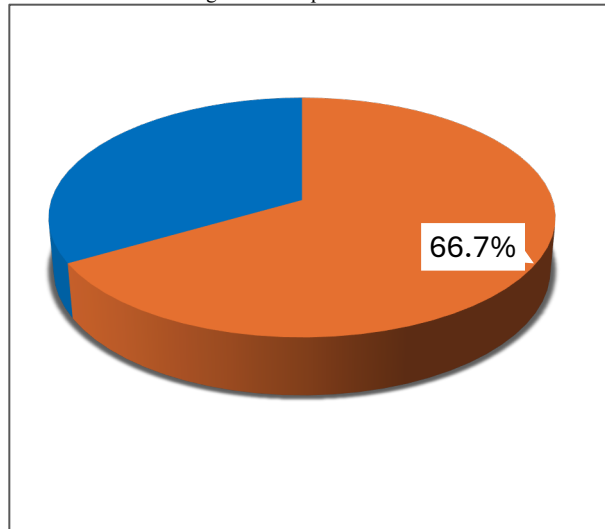


Figure-45 Rates of recommendation execution for 2022-2023

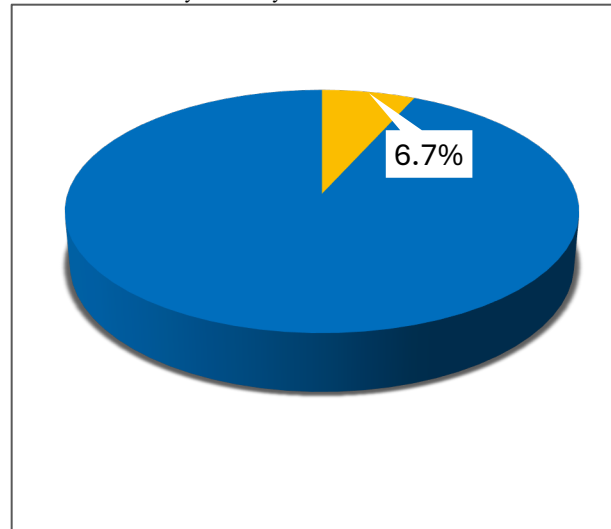


Figure-46 Effort rate of the ministry to completed the recommendations

Implemented Recommendations

1. Institutionalizing the classification of enforced disappearance as a transgression against humanity, aligning with the parameters delineated within Article 5 of the Convention for the Safeguarding of All Individuals from Enforced Disappearance.
2. Introduce a tailored statute ensuring the entitlement to reparations, diverging from the application of generic guidelines for indemnification claims.
3. Enhance endeavors to locate sites of mass internment.
4. Persist in tailoring legislative measures to align with pertinent agreements pertaining to the eradication of enforced disappearances.

Unmet Recommendations

1. Implement the establishment of a comprehensive and centralized repository for individuals reported missing.
2. Develop a (DNA) database for individuals reported missing within recent years, aimed at expediting victim identification processes.

Below are the measures, laws, guidelines, procedures, and practical steps taken in implementing the international recommendations:

The directives outlined by the Ministry of Martyrs and Anfal Affairs pertain to the execution of internationally recognized recommendations:

- Directive for Determination of Kurdistan Political Prisoners' Entitlements No. (8) of 2020.
- Directive for Determination of Entitlements and Benefits for Relatives of Martyrs and Anfal Victims No. (9) of 2020.
- Instruction No. (1) of 2021, aimed at streamlining the application process for the Kurdistan Political Prisoners and Detainees Entitlements Law No. (11) of 2011, as amended.
- Instruction No. (2) of 2021, focusing on facilitating compliance with the law regarding the entitlements and benefits for relatives of martyrs and Anfal victims in the Kurdistan Region No. (9) of 2007, as amended.
- Guideline for Determination of Entitlements for Victims of Chemical Weapons No. 3 of 2021.
- Directive No. (4) of 2021, concerning the execution of the Law on Entitlements and Benefits for Genocide Victims in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq No. (9) of 2015.
- Instruction No. (5) of 2021, addressing the transfer of records of martyrs from various forces (Peshmerga, Internal Security Forces, Security, Anti-Terrorism) to the Ministry of Martyrs and Anfal Affairs.
- Instruction No. (1) of 2022, regarding the Establishment of the Fund for Support and Assistance to the Families of Martyrs, Anfal Victims, and Genocide Victims in Iraqi Kurdistan.

Providing services to the families of martyrs and Anfal victims

The Ministry of Martyrs and Anfal Affairs extends its assistance to all beneficiaries, irrespective of background or circumstance, ensuring equitable access to essential provisions such as stipends, educational support, housing, matrimonial endowments for offspring of martyrs and survivors of genocide, as well as social welfare initiatives. Upholding the legacy of our fallen heroes remains paramount, guided by established legal protocols and procedural frameworks, notwithstanding occasional service interruptions attributable to fiscal constraints.

Identification and investigation of genocide crimes

A primary focus of the Ministry of Martyrs, through its official conduits, is to formally acknowledge the events of Anfal, chemical assaults, and other offenses perpetrated against the Kurdish populace as instances of genocide on the global stage. Following the endorsement of the Council of Ministers via communication number (1718), the Minister of Martyrs' Affairs, by Decree No. (320), instituted the Genocide Affairs Committee within the Ministry. The committee's mandate is to meticulously identify and scrutinize instances of genocide crimes committed against the Kurdish community.

The level of reform

The extent of reform delineated in Article 2 of Part 2 of the Legislation on Remuneration, Benefits, Subsidies, Entitlements, and Retirement in the Kurdistan Region, under the auspices of Law No. (2) of 2020, pertains to the Ministry of Martyrs' Affairs. Subsequent to the enactment of the aforementioned legislation, the ministry has promulgated several directives aimed at its enforcement. Pursuant to the stipulations therein, multiple subordinate committees have been established, and three comprehensive reform assessments have been issued. These reports delineate the procedural framework for the implementation of the reform legislation with the ultimate aim of fostering equity and fairness.

Findings of the Implementation Committee for Reform Legislation

The mandate bestowed upon this committee is the meticulous examination of the documented instances of individuals who have made the ultimate sacrifice across various classifications, adhering strictly to the prescribed protocols and methodologies. Presented below is a tabulated summary elucidating the committee's endeavors encompassing cases spanning battlefields, genocidal events, and civilian casualties within the jurisdictions of Erbil, Sulaimani, and Duhok provinces.

Table 35 Statistics of verification of Martyrs' cases

Province	Previous audited	Currently authenticated
Erbil	3955	6896
Sulaimani	8707	9189
Duhok	5392	7053
The total	18054	23138

Outcomes of the committee tasked with auditing, reviewing, and rectifying the rosters of individuals detained for political reasons:

A consultative body has been designated to collaborate with the Ministry of Finance, the Coordination and Oversight Office, and a delegate from the Council of Ministers in order to compile a comprehensive report for the High Committee overseeing the enactment of the Reform Law, facilitating a conclusive determination.

Statistics of Political Prisoners:

Table 36 Number of political prisoners receiving allowances

Number of political prisoners	
Number of political prisoners receiving allowances	5258
Number of political prisoners not receiving allowances	18612

Findings of the Audit and Review Committee Regarding Cases of Chemical Weapons Victims

In the year 2021, a specialized committee was convened to oversee and prepare the cases concerning victims of chemical weapons, operating in close conjunction with the Ministries of Finance and Health. All requisite administrative and financial protocols for the committee's operations have been duly finalized, paving the way for the commencement of comprehensive reviews and health assessments for beneficiaries of the initial phase of chemical weapons exposure.

During the outset of 2024, the Rehabilitation Committee for Victims of Chemical Weapons under the auspices of the Ministry of Martyrs and Anfal Affairs, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, conducted a thorough examination of all individuals receiving monthly stipends from the Ministry of Martyrs. The findings from the health assessments revealed that out of (585) documented victims of chemical weapons, (223) exhibited exposure levels surpassing 40%, as determined by the medical committee. Concurrently, (223) individuals displayed exposure rates falling below the 40% threshold.

The compiled statistics and examination outcomes have been formally conveyed to the Office of the Prime Minister via Correspondence No. (149) from the General Directorate of Martyrs' Families Services within our Ministry, dated (4/3/2024).

Subsequently, health committees will imminently initiate their activities within the provinces of Erbil, Sulaimani, and Halabja.

Statistics of Chemical Weapons Victims

Table 37 Case numbers of chemical weapons victims

Case number of chemical weapons victims	
Erbil	432
Sulaimani	360
Duhok	11
The totality of the cases	803

Report of the Audit and Review Panel Concerning Instances of Genocide Single Cases

In accordance with the stipulations outlined in Article (4) of Law No. (9) of 2015, pertaining to the Rights of Genocide Single Individuals in the Kurdistan Region from 2021 onward, the Oversight Committee tasked with Evaluating Instances of Genocide Single Cases within the Ministry of Martyrs has undertaken the meticulous examination and appraisal of said cases. A total of (361) cases were subjected to scrutiny, as mandated by the committee's jurisdiction, presided over by a distinguished jurist. Of these, (321) cases were duly validated, while (40) cases did not meet the requisite criteria for approval. Additionally, (57) cases were subject to evaluative commentary.

First stage: After reviewing the first batch of cases, this committee decided as follows:

Table 38 Genocide singleton Case Numbers

Number of Genocide Singleton Cases
223 Cases approved of which 3 singletons have died
49 Cases are not approved
84 Cases were considered inadmissible due to lack of evidence

Second phase: Progress is ongoing on the subsequent group comprising approximately (26) cases, expected to reach completion in the foreseeable future.

Level of Services

- Pursuant to the decree of the Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Regional Government, a total of (11,141) parcels of land were allocated to honor the esteemed descendants of battlefield martyrs and victims of genocide who had not previously availed themselves of such benefits. This allocation was undertaken to enact the provisions outlined in the aforementioned decree.
- In an effort to facilitate the pilgrimage journey for the kin of martyrs in June 2023, the Ministry of Martyrs and Anfal Victims, in collaboration with the Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs, organized a Hajj pilgrimage for (100) relatives of martyrs.
- Collaboratively with the Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs, the allocation was augmented to include (120) relatives of martyrs and victims of Anfal, with distribution proportions to be determined by the general directorates and directorates affiliated with the ministry. The final selection will be conducted via a lottery system.
- The reimbursement of educational loans for families of martyrs, spanning previous years and during the tenure of the ninth cabinet, amounted to over (19,500,000,000) Iraqi dinars.
- Extensive support has been extended to martyr families, including guidance and facilitation of administrative processes through relevant institutions.
- In adherence to Directive No. (23) of 2020, a collaborative effort between the Ministry of Martyrs and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research resulted in the provision of (5) complimentary seats in each department and college during the year 2023.

Administrative Domain

- In line with the provisions delineated in Article (9) of Law No. 37 of 2007, known as the "Legislation for the Support and Assistance Fund for the Families of Martyrs, Anfal Victims, and Genocide Victims," the Ministry of Martyrs and Anfal Affairs has issued Directive No. (1) in 2022. This directive delineates a range of services tailored to the families of martyrs. Implementation will commence subsequent to the fulfillment of requisite legal, administrative, and financial protocols.
- Following endorsement by the Council of Ministers, as conveyed in written correspondence from the Presidency of the Bureau, Reference No. (2918) dated (21/9/2022), and the issuance of two ministerial decrees from the Ministry of Martyrs and Anfal Affairs, referenced as No. (3384) on (9/10/2022) and No. (4040) on (16/11/2022), the establishment of a committee has been decreed. This committee is tasked with determining the status of missing children, under the leadership of the Minister and comprised of representatives from the Ministries of Interior, Justice, Health, and Social Affairs. Its mandate is to diligently pursue the whereabouts of missing Halabja Kurdish children.
- Subsequent to convening, the committee has undertaken several sessions aimed at formulating procedural frameworks. Collaboration has been initiated with the Consulate

General of the Islamic Republic of Iran, facilitated through the ministry's liaison office, to explore strategies for locating and repatriating missing children from the Halabja chemical attack.

- An official delegation, led by the Minister of Martyrs and Anfal Victims Affairs, undertook a diplomatic mission to the Islamic Republic of Iran. The purpose of this visit was to engage with the Martyrs Foundation and other pertinent entities within the Islamic Republic of Iran, with a view toward locating the missing Halabja children.

Compensation for Victims of the Ba'ath Regime

On the 13th of April 2023, the Minister of Martyrs and Anfal Victims Affairs conducted a visit to Baghdad aimed at ensuring the rightful entitlements of the families affected by the atrocities of the Ba'ath regime, including martyrs, Anfal victims, and political prisoners. This endeavor was aligned with the constitutional provisions outlined in the Iraqi Permanent Constitution, notably emphasizing Article 132.

During the meeting with the Iraqi Prime Minister, discussions centered around addressing the grievances of relatives of martyrs and political prisoners, with a particular focus on acknowledging the historical suffering endured by the Kurdish people in Iraqi Kurdistan, characterized as genocide perpetrated by the former Iraqi regime.

It was highlighted that the federal government has yet to discharge its legal and constitutional obligations in effectively implementing the stipulations outlined in the constitution concerning this matter, notably Article 132. Thus, there was a call for enhanced coordination between the Kurdistan Regional Government and the federal authorities of Iraq. Furthermore, emphasis was placed on the dignified repatriation of the remains of the Kurdish martyrs who fell victim to genocide, back to their ancestral homeland in Kurdistan.

Facilitation of collaboration among domestic and international stakeholders regarding the matter of genocide in 2023.

Coordination among domestic and international stakeholders regarding the matter of genocide within the Parliament of the Catalan/Spanish Region will prioritize the acknowledgment and remembrance of the tragic events endured by the Kurdish population on a global scale.

Efforts for collaboration between the Ministry of Martyrs and Anfal Affairs and the KG LOBBY CENTER aim to advocate for the acknowledgment of Kurdish genocide cases, emphasizing the importance of elevating this issue to an international platform. Notably, on 2/11/2023, the International Association of Genocide Scholars endorsed the legislation recognizing the Kurdish genocide, marking a significant step towards global awareness and justice.

DNA testing for the resolution of cases involving enforced disappearance

About (DNA) testing several committees and boards have been established to address the issue of missing children in Halabja. In 2017, the Ministry of Health earmarked £13,000 for collaboration with (Kings College London) to facilitate the collection of blood samples from

over 50 families in Halabja. However, Kings College London has encountered constraints in continuing the blood sample analysis process, primarily due to financial constraints.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Higher Education, a decision has been made to inaugurate the Department of Criminal Evidence at Erbil Polytechnic University. This initiative, prioritized for Ministry of Interior personnel, has seen the admission of 25 individuals for the academic year 2021-2022. Upon completion of their studies, graduates from this department will receive a technical diploma in criminal evidence.

To facilitate DNA testing at the Criminal Evidence Directorate, it is imperative to address the current absence of requisite testing apparatus. Additionally, there is a pressing need for comprehensive training of Interior Ministry personnel in alignment with global standards pertaining to the preservation of evidentiary material.

Implementation of the Reform Legislation concerning the Ministry of Martyrs and Anfal Affairs (Governing the Entitlements and Benefits of the Descendants of Martyrs and Anfal Victims, Detainees, and Political Prisoners)

Based on the data and insights furnished by the Office of Coordination and Monitoring throughout the reform initiative within the ninth cabinet, ongoing endeavors persist to enact suitable protocols and frameworks in this domain. The Ministry of Martyrs and Anfal Affairs stands as a pivotal governmental body wherein the reform endeavor has traversed multiple intricate phases, with strides in progression ongoing.

The following strategies have been identified for the implementation of recommendations on reform, particularly in enhancing the scope of initiatives associated with the Ministry of Martyrs and Anfal Affairs:

- Drafting guidelines for the classification of benefits for relatives of martyrs and submitting them to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers.
- Revocation of the allocation for (13,282) beneficiaries, as stipulated in Ministerial Decree No. 48 dated 6/1/2021, resulting in the reimbursement of a monthly sum totaling (996,150,000) ninety-six million one hundred and fifty thousand dinars.
- Transferring the cases of (163) disabled soldiers deceased from the Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs to the Ministry of Martyrs and Anfal Affairs to facilitate provision of entitlements to their beneficiaries in accordance with the legislation on the rights and privileges of relatives of martyrs and Anfal victims No. 9 of 2007, as amended in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.
- The Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs has relocated the cases of (1018) martyrs from the ISIS conflict from its jurisdiction to the Ministry of Martyrs and Anfal Affairs to ensure provision of services to their beneficiaries as outlined in Law No. 9 of 2007, as amended in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, constituting the initial phase of this transition.

- Offering educational opportunities to the offspring of martyrs (Peshmerga, Internal Security, Security, Anti-Terrorism) whose cases have been transferred to the Ministry of Martyrs and Anfal Affairs by directive of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers.

Tasked by the Ministry of Martyrs and Anfal Affairs, committees have been formed to enact the reform legislation.

- Three sub-committees have been established within the general directorates located in Erbil, Sulaimani, and Duhok, dedicated to meticulously scrutinizing the cases of martyrs and Anfal victims.
- A specialized Genocide Lone Committee has been convened to comprehensively review the cases of those affected by genocide.
- A Grievances (Complaints) Committee has been instituted to adjudicate upon complaints received.
- A dedicated committee focusing on victims of chemical weapons has been assembled to meticulously assess their cases and liaise with health committees accordingly.
- The registration files of new martyrs have been redirected from the ministry to the general directorates, facilitating a thorough reevaluation in accordance with the stipulations outlined in Law No. (9) of 2007, as amended—the Law on Rights and Privileges of Martyrs' Families.
- Information forms tailored for auditing and review processes have been devised for various categories of martyrs—ranging from those of the battlefield, genocide, citizens, prisoners, political prisoners, to genocide orphans—these forms are being printed and dispatched to the respective committees.

Statistics resulting from case review

Table39 Number of martyrs' case reviews

No	Sub-Committee	Case type	Cases	Audited	Investigate	Approved	It doesn't cover it
1	Erbil Directorate	Martyr of the battlefield	12,940	1348	166	1080	102
		Martyr of genocide	3,030	820	300	500	20
		Martyr of the citizen	8,458	1787	650	1012	125
2	Sulaimani Administration	Martyr of the battlefield	17,695	902	267	594	41
		Martyr of genocide	7,826	-	-	-	-
		Martyr of the citizen	8,762	7806	1810	5419	577

3	Duhok Administration	Martyr of the battlefield	6,415	2417	1649	674	94
		Martyr of genocide	778	775	149	626	-
		Martyr of the citizen	3,908	1282	269	988	25
4	Genocide Singles Committee	The lone of genocide	412	412	58	312	42
5	Committee on Chemical Weapons Exposure	Exposed to chemical weapons	9,202	703			
6	Ministry Reform Committee	Martyr's guardian	13,282	This grant was canceled because it had no legal basis.			

Total statistics of martyrs' cases

Table 40 Number of martyrs' cases

No	Case type	Total Case	Audited	Investigate	Approved	Doesn't cover it
1	Martyr of the battlefield	37050	4501	1916	2348	237
2	Martyr of genocide	11634	1595	449	1126	20
3	Martyr of the citizen	21128	11793	3717	7334	742
Total		69812	17889	6082	10808	999

Initiating a comprehensive review and adjustment of the privileges extended to individuals purportedly classified as political prisoners, ensuring adherence to the stipulations outlined in Law No. 11 of 2011 (Legislation Regarding Privileges of Kurdistan Political Prisoners) as amended.

- Furthermore, through Ministerial Decree No. (45) issued on 30/6/2020, directing the Directorate of Political Prisoners Affairs and the Information Bank within the Ministry of Martyrs and Anfal Affairs to collaborate closely with the High Committee of Biometrics and the Information Technology Office of the Council of Ministers. This collaboration aims to facilitate the implementation of biometric authentication and electronic recordkeeping systems for accurate documentation of martyrs, Anfal victims, prisoners, and individuals identified as political prisoners.
- Submitting (296) communications subsequent to 1/7/2020 to the Federal Iraqi Government, delineating the identities of (513) individuals detained on political grounds, aimed at

validating their arrest documentation and verifying the absence of concurrent stipends, yielding the ensuing outcomes:

- (99) individuals have furnished corroborative evidence.
- (39) individuals lacked substantiating documentation.
- (12) individuals have expressed a need for fingerprint submission.
- (3) individuals have been summoned for an in-person visit in Baghdad.
- (2) individuals have been requested to furnish supplementary information.
- (358) individuals are yet to provide responses.

Table 41 Case review numbers pertaining to grants

Total number of registrants	Total number of scholarship recipients	Approved audited file	Approved cases currently receiving grants	Unworthy case	Those who have not decided on the choice of salary or grant
25734	5157	1636	1504	73	59

According to the amended Law No. 11 of 2011, those who have received a monthly allowance for 10 years and have not received any salary and allowance have made the following choice between one

Table 42 Grant-specific reform statistics

Approved audited case number	The number of those who chose the grant and cut the rest of their salary	people chose other salaries after their allowances were cut
1636	358	23

Management of Benefits for Descendants of Political Prisoners and Prisoners, in Accordance with Relevant Pension Regulations

- The Directorate of Political Prisoners Affairs is directed to undertake requisite measures for addressing the descendants of political prisoners in the event of their demise, aligning with the prevailing pension regulations within the Kurdistan Region. To this end, the Ministry of Finance and Economy has issued Financial Directive No. (19) of 2020, pertaining to the beneficiaries of political prisoners.
- To date, (145) political prisoners have passed away, and their beneficiaries have been handled in compliance with the pertinent pension regulations. Among these, (62) heirs of deceased political prisoners are ineligible for receiving allowances, while (83) heirs have seen reductions in accordance with the applicable pension provisions.
- Redefining the government's obligation towards covering healthcare and educational expenses for the offspring and spouses of martyrs who remain unmarried, within both public and private educational institutions across the region. Eligibility criteria shall be delineated in accordance with Clause (2) of Article (7) of Law No. (9) of 2007, namely the Law on

Entitlements and Privileges of Relatives of Martyrs and Anfal Victims in the Kurdistan Region.

- The issuance of Financial Directive No. (23) of 2020, concerning educational and healthcare services for families of martyrs, Anfal victims, and political prisoners, entails collaborative efforts with the Ministries of Finance, Economy, Higher Education, Scientific Research, Education, Health, and the Office of the Prime Minister.
- Establishment of servers and integration of the general directorates of the Ministry of Martyrs and Anfal Affairs with the Ministry of Finance and Economy, aimed at digitizing the data of martyrs and political prisoners, facilitating the management and oversight of pending educational expenditures.
- The Kurdistan Regional Government has resolved to allocate (19,686,472,600) nineteen billion, six hundred eighty-six million, four hundred seventy-two thousand, six hundred dinars for the educational fees of offspring and spouses of martyrs, prisoners, and political prisoners, or their dependents, as outlined in Financial Directive No. (23) of 2020. This allocation includes a discount of (25%) on amounts disbursed to private educational institutions, with an expenditure of (18,064,547,600) eighteen billion, sixty-four million, five hundred forty-seven thousand, six hundred dinars executed thus far.

Necessary measures to enact the directives put forth by the Ministry of Martyrs and Anfal Affairs

Following a sequence of workshops and deliberative sessions, the Office of the Coordinator for International Guidance has outlined specific protocols, which have been communicated by the Office of the Prime Minister to pertinent stakeholders, including the Ministry of Martyrs and Anfal Affairs.

- Facilitate collaboration among governmental entities and the Genocide Committee of the Ministry to systematically gather all pertinent evidence and documentation pertaining to the historical genocides inflicted upon the Kurdish populace in Iraq, with the intention of presenting such findings to the International Criminal Court located in The Hague.
- Advocate for Iraq's inclusion in the International Criminal Court and encourage its endorsement of the Rome Statute, through diplomatic channels and engagement with the House of Representatives and pertinent stakeholders.
- Enhance the capabilities of healthcare institutions to conduct genetic tests, including DNA analysis, to facilitate the identification of victims of genocide in prospective cases.
- Maintain ongoing dialogue and cooperation with the Federal Government of Iraq to ensure the effective implementation of Article 140 of the Iraqi Constitution, which stipulates reparations for victims adversely impacted by successive Iraqi regimes.
- Organize conferences and seminars, both domestically and internationally, aimed at raising awareness among foreign nations regarding the atrocities of genocide perpetrated against the Kurdish population.

Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources

Out of the (8) recommendations submitted to the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources in 2022, (5) recommendations have been implemented and (3) recommendations were in the process of implementation. Compared to 2023, the number of recommendations implemented has increased to (6) recommendations, and the number of recommendations in the process of implementation has increased to (2) recommendations. In this regard the implementation rate becomes (87.5%)

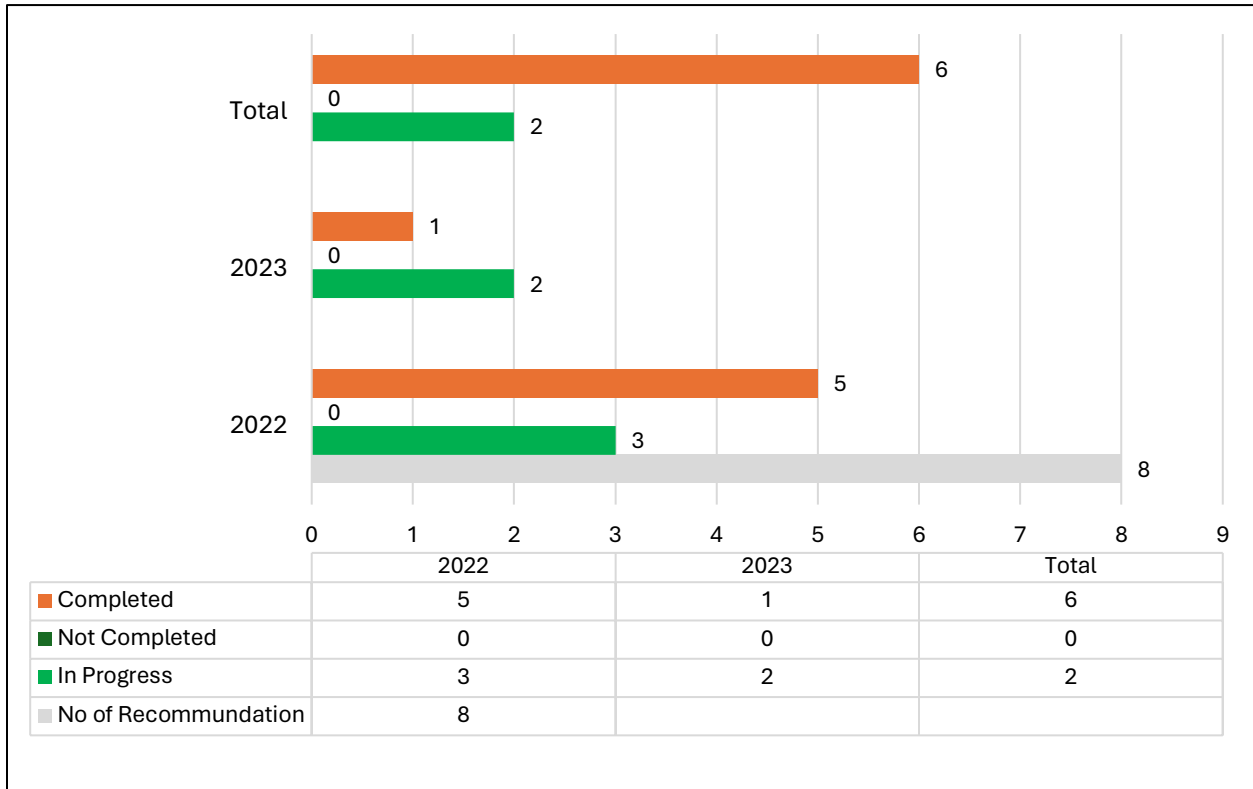


Figure 47: Implementation of Recommendations Related to the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources

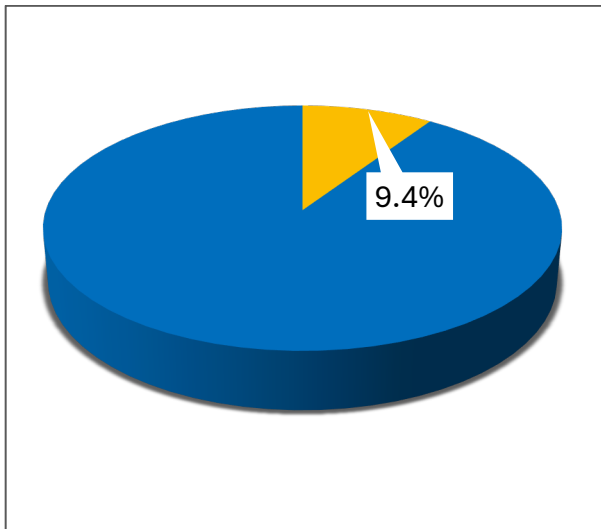


Figure-48 Rates of recommendation execution for 2022-2023

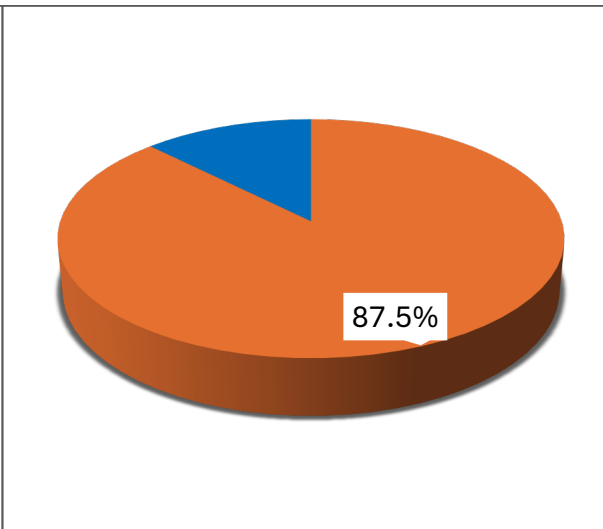


Figure-49 Effort rate of the ministry to completed the recommendations

Implemented Recommendations

1. Foster endeavors aimed at attaining the strategic imperatives concerning food recuperation and security for the period spanning 2018 to 2022.
2. Persist in endeavors to realize the Nutrition and Food Safety Strategy delineated for the years 2018 through 2022.
3. Sustain initiatives dedicated to environmental conservation as outlined in its sustainable development blueprint.
4. Facilitate the repatriation of expired merchandise to their countries of origin as opposed to their disposal within regional boundaries.
5. Forge collaborations with pertinent national bodies overseeing matters pertaining to mine clearance.
6. Undertake revisions to the protocols concerning wildlife preservation and hunting practices.

Recommendations Under Consideration for Implementation:

1. Enhance endeavors within the confines of the public distribution system initiative to actualize the entitlement to sustenance for all citizens, particularly those who are underserved and marginalized.
2. Persist in endeavors to secure the sustainable and proficient utilization of water reservoirs, while fostering the adoption of innovative irrigation methodologies.

Below are the measures, laws, guidelines, procedures, and practical steps taken in implementing the international recommendations:

Revision of legislation and regulations pertaining to the agricultural sector

During the timeframe spanning from 2021 through the first half of 2022, the Ministry has undertaken the issuance of (3) legislative enactments and (13) guiding directives, along with the modification of a single statute, concurrently advancing the preparation of (8) legislative proposals and preliminary directives, enumerated as follows:

Under the auspices of the ninth cabinet of the Kurdistan Regional Government, (4) legislative enactments pertinent to agriculture were promulgated, detailed as follows:

- Statute concerning Oversight of Private Sector Agricultural Ventures, designated as Law No. 20 of 2021.
- Legislation pertaining to the Production and Importation of Agricultural Seeds, Plantlings, and Varieties, identified as Law No. (16) of 2021.
- Kurdistan Water Resources Management Act, codified as Law No. (4) of 2022.
- Regulation and Management Act concerning Domestic and Feral Fauna, specified as Law No. (14) of 2022.

In the year 2021:

- Ministerial Decree No. (1) of 2021 concerning the Amendment of Regulations Governing the Establishment and Licensing of Fisheries Projects as per Ministerial Directive No. (1) of 2013.
- Ministerial Decree No. (4) of 2021 issued by the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources, amending Ministerial Directive No. (8) of 2013.
- Ministerial Instruction No. (5) of 2021 from the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources regarding the Issuance of Licenses for Orchard Establishment.
- Ministerial Decree No. (6) of 2021 for the Amendment of Ministerial Directive No. 1 of 2019 by the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources.
- Ministerial Instruction No. (7) of 2021 from the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources, concerning the Issuance of Licenses for Fasting Facilities Construction.
- Ministerial Decision No. (1) of 2021 by the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources, regulating the Import of Live Animals for Fattening and Slaughter.
- Ministerial Instruction No. (9) of 2021 from the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources, on the Establishment and Licensing Procedures for Fish Resource Projects.
- Ministerial Instruction No. (8) of 2021 from the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources regarding the Establishment and Licensing of Livestock Farms.
- Ministerial Decision No. (3) of 2021 for the Extension of Decision No. (611) of 1977, issued by the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources.

The year 2022

- Guideline No. (1) of 2022 concerning the regulation of the importation of pharmaceuticals, vaccines, and veterinary supplies.
- Guideline No. (2) of 2022 regarding the accreditation of veterinary licenses for facilities engaged in the production of meat and its derivatives.
- Guideline No. (3) of 2022 pertaining to the authorization process for the establishment of plastic greenhouse projects.
- Directive No. (4) of 2022 concerning the enforcement of legislation governing supervisors of agricultural projects within the private sector.
- Resolution No. (3) of 2022 extending the provisions of Decision 611, addressing rectification of settlement discrepancies, as issued by the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources.

The development of these legislative measures necessitates concerted efforts.

The Ministry has spearheaded the formulation and refinement of (14) bills, guidelines, and declarations pertinent to agricultural concerns. Among the legislative initiatives earmarked for future deliberation are:

- Drafting legislation aimed at subsidizing low-interest financial facilities for rural women to fortify the agricultural sector.
- Crafting legislation mandating quotas for women's participation in government-led agricultural projects.
- Formulating legislation governing agricultural bank loans, with provisions mandating equitable distribution to rural women.
- Proposing legislation for the establishment of agricultural cooperatives within the Kurdistan Region.
- Advancing legislation aimed at resolving disputes over encroachments on agricultural land, is currently under review by the council.
- Drafting the Warehouses Organization and Management Bill.
- Formulating guidelines governing the import and export of livestock and livestock products.

KRG Initiatives in Agricultural Sector Support

- Over the past four years, the Kurdistan Regional Government has diligently executed (190) projects aimed at bolstering the agricultural domain.
- Under Cabinet Decree No. (79), customs exemptions have been granted for the importation of essential fodder ingredients such as soybean, protein, premix, and oil.
- In a proactive move, the rental fees for electricity units utilized in agricultural projects have been substantially reduced from (130) dinars to (30) dinars.
- Efforts have been directed towards the amendment of pertinent laws and regulations, with a focus on streamlining investment procedures and fostering a conducive environment for private sector investors, thereby safeguarding their interests and ensuring product integrity.
- Land allocation for municipal expansion and investment endeavors has been conscientiously undertaken, aligning with broader developmental goals.
- Enhanced agricultural productivity and fortified food security have been achieved through strategic measures.
- Facilitation of import and export activities pertaining to agricultural commodities, veterinary pharmaceuticals, vaccines, chemical agents, pesticides, and agricultural requisites has been meticulously overseen.
- Critical infrastructure development, including the construction of dams, ponds, irrigation systems, wells, and initiatives ensuring water security, has been prioritized.
- Vigilant monitoring and management of strategic dams in the Kurdistan Region, alongside concerted efforts in negotiating water-related matters, underscore the region's commitment to resource management.
- Licensing procedures for agricultural ventures and ancillary projects have been streamlined, fostering the expansion of agricultural investments and the growth of agro-industries.

- In alignment with broader economic objectives, initiatives aimed at job creation and the facilitation of small and medium-sized enterprises within the agricultural sector have been vigorously pursued.
- Emphasis has been placed on research initiatives, agricultural advisory services, and capacity-building through educational programs.
- The preservation of forests, meadows, and nurseries has been accorded due significance, with endeavors focused on augmenting green spaces and environmental conservation.
- Implementation of measures to address soil conservation and erosion control has been an integral part of the region's sustainable agricultural strategy.

Key initiatives and deliberations aimed at advancing the agricultural sector within this cabinet include:

- Delegating a significant portion (90%) of ministerial authority to the directorates within the ministry for enhanced administrative efficiency.
- Pioneering customs exemptions, as outlined in Decision No. 79 by the Council of Ministers, to bolster agricultural endeavors. Over 100 companies and agricultural proprietors have availed themselves of this measure, with ongoing committee efforts within the ministry to sustain its implementation.
- Introducing an annual agricultural schedule to delineate levies, charges, and product prohibitions, aligning with federal directives to fortify farmers' endeavors and facilitate product marketing.
- Collaborating with the Netherlands to draft a comprehensive policy document, Figureing a long-range course for the enhancement of the food value chain and broader agricultural domain.
- Initiating the National Farmers' Wheat Marketing Project, featuring the establishment of a substantial zero flour mill along with facilities for sawar, pasta, brooch, wheat flour, alik, and kepak production.
- Reinstating operations at the Harir and Sharazoor tomato processing plants, alongside granting licensure for the Halabja tomato factory.
- Extending financial support to over 300 agricultural entrepreneurs through a five-year loan program, forged through a collaborative agreement between the Ministry and Qurtas Islamic Bank.
- Facilitating access to agricultural machinery and equipment for over 1500 farmers and project proprietors through extended-term installment plans over five years, under the purview of a memorandum of understanding with Haroon Company.
- Conducting a pioneering survey of agricultural lands and farming populations in the Kurdistan Region, leveraging satellite technology to ascertain wheat cultivation extents.
- Subsidizing agricultural electricity tariffs, reducing the rate from 130 dinars to 30 dinars per kilowatt, to alleviate financial burdens on farmers.

- Strategically marketing agricultural products domestically, nationally, and internationally to capitalize on diverse market opportunities.
- Establishing warehouse laboratories, with earmarked funding constituting 20% of the Kurdistan Regional Government's revenue, to enhance agricultural research and development.
- Effectively implementing 15 directives and recommendations from the Council of Ministers across various agricultural service domains.
- Commencement of multiple state-of-the-art testing facilities renowned for their excellence in disease management and the analysis of agricultural produce, achieved through fruitful collaborations with the private sector.
- Facilitation of land provision for various ventures, adhering meticulously to legal protocols and guidelines, encompassing agricultural, investment, and foundational agricultural initiatives.
- Marked augmentation in the percentage of investments directed towards agriculture, escalating from the prior administration's 1.8% to approximately 10% under the present governance.
- Inauguration of the preeminent World Research and Production Center (WHC) situated within the modern infrastructure of Erbil.
- Establishment of Agricultural Directorates in (Raperin, Soran, and Zakho) for the inaugural time, alongside the inauguration of directorates specializing in veterinary services, horticulture, and irrigation.
- Emphasis was placed on bolstering the veterinary domain, with a keen focus on meat examination protocols and disease management, notably targeting ailments such as dengue fever, Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD), and Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever (CCHF).
- Execution of (31) contracts and memoranda of understanding aimed at fostering coordination and advancement within the agricultural sector of the region, serving as pivotal catalysts for economic rejuvenation and the enhancement of the food industry.

Generating Job Opportunities

- Pursuant to the resolution enacted by the Council of Ministers No. (172) On 20/9/2022, a mandate was established to uphold a minimum employment rate of (75%) within private vocations and ventures, thereby fostering increased job opportunities within the agricultural sector, and facilitating the engagement of (44203) individuals.
- Industrial establishments accredited during the tenure of the ninth cabinet have thus far engendered (13,199) positions.
- The recruitment of (200) permanent and contractual personnel within the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources signifies a commitment to bolstering workforce participation and operational efficacy.

Gender equality initiatives within the Ministry of Agriculture:

- Facilitation of a Memorandum of Understanding with the High Council for the Advancement of Women's Affairs, reinforcing collaborative efforts towards gender parity.
- Pioneering the establishment of the Women's Harvest Association for Agricultural Advancement, providing a platform for female empowerment and participation in agricultural development.
- Launching over ten specialized training programs catering to 250 unemployed women and female agricultural entrepreneurs, fostering skill enhancement and economic independence.
- Formulation of diverse projects and proposals dedicated to bolstering the presence and contribution of women in the agricultural workforce.

Ensuring Food Security

Firstly, regarding the domain of livestock, poultry, and meat production initiatives:

Livestock endeavors within prior administrations numbered 1870 projects, with the current tally standing at 2379 projects. Specifically, within this administration, 509 projects have been successfully established and granted licenses across chicken meat production, egg production, cattle breeding, and dairy sectors. These initiatives operate with notable vigor and uphold standards of exceptional quality, exemplified as follows:

1. Poultry Production Projects: A total of 380 poultry projects have been inaugurated, marking a notable increase from the previous count of 1565 projects to 1915 projects within this administration alone. Consequently, our annual chicken meat output surpasses 50% of domestic demand.
2. Egg Production Ventures: The establishment of 34 egg production projects under this administration has led to a significant enhancement in production capacity. Formerly at 1.2 billion eggs, the current count stands at 3.87 billion, representing a 75% augmentation in domestic production capacity.
3. Goat Breeding and Fattening Initiatives: Forty projects dedicated to goat breeding and fattening have been established within this administration, boasting a collective capacity exceeding 50,000 goats.
4. Sheep and Goat Breeding Schemes: Noteworthy is the establishment of three sheep and goat breeding projects, accommodating over 5,000 animals, solely within this administration.
5. Dairy Production Endeavors: Eleven dairy cow projects have been initiated under this administration, distinguished by high production efficiency and superior quality standards.
6. Slaughterhouse Establishments: The commissioning of five poultry slaughterhouses, each capable of processing 10,000 chickens per hour, underscores our commitment to enhancing processing capacity and efficiency.
7. Poultry Hatchery and Maternal Egg Projects: Twelve poultry hatchery projects and three maternal egg projects have been launched, contributing to the bolstering of our poultry industry's supply chain resilience.

8. **Garlic Production Facilities:** The operationalization of 44 garlic production factories, yielding approximately 2.5 million tons annually, with an energy output exceeding 900 per hour, reflects a significant stride in meeting domestic demands. Moreover, the establishment of nine advanced aquaculture factories further diversifies our agricultural portfolio.
9. **Fish Resource Initiatives:** The Kurdistan Region currently hosts 413 fish resource production projects, underlining our commitment to sustainable resource management and economic diversification.

Secondly: Horticulture, forestry, and pastures

1. Potato Production:

- Formerly, the annual potato production stood at (2) thousand tons during preceding administrations.
- Presently, under the current administration, the production has seen a substantial surge, exceeding (600) thousand tons annually. This surge has been achieved over an expanse of 100 thousand dunams dedicated to potato cultivation.
- The licensing of (7) factories engaged in industrial potato processing, specifically for chip and finger production, has notably contributed to this increase, utilizing over (70) thousand tons of potatoes annually.

2. Cultivation in Controlled Environments:

- The Kurdistan Region boasts approximately 30,000 plastic houses, alongside several pioneering endeavors in hydroponic systems.
- Over (4) thousand farmers tend to an expanse exceeding (5429) dunams, significantly bolstering the region's vegetable and agricultural output.
- Notably, Sulaimani hosts 22,000 plastic houses, constituting over 75% of the region's plastic house initiatives.

3. Mushroom Cultivation Initiatives:

The Kurdistan Region hosts 11 mushroom production facilities, collectively yielding over 3500 tons of mushrooms annually, generating employment opportunities for more than 300 individuals. Under the current administration, five state-of-the-art facilities have been inaugurated, catering to a substantial portion of the region's mushroom requirements.

4. Olive Oil Manufacturing:

At present, the Kurdistan Region boasts (7) prominent olive oil factories, annually yielding over (1000) tons of olive oil. Over (1500) farmers are actively involved in olive grove cultivation, sustaining this vital sector.

5- Warehouses and refrigerators:

Within the current administration, licensing has been granted to 600 refrigeration and storage facilities, with a combined capacity exceeding 80,000 tons for the preservation of fruits and vegetables.

6- Bees and beekeeping:

In the Kurdistan Region, a community of 10,000 proficient beekeepers oversees the production of over 1,000 tons of natural honey annually, facilitated by approximately 500,000 bees.

Thirdly: Indigenous fruits and vegetables are cultivated within the confines of the Kurdistan Region's agricultural warehouses.

- The yearly yield of indigenous vegetables stands at (800-1000) tons annually.
- Indigenous fruits boast an annual production exceeding 300,000 tons.
- Noteworthy achievements in attaining self-sufficiency within the Kurdistan Region encompass staple commodities such as wheat, barley, tomatoes, potatoes, poultry, eggs, pomegranates, garlic derivatives, seasonal vegetables, and leafy greens.

Fourth: Wheat basic production over the past four years

During this administrative term, a total of (16.279) metric tons of wheat were cultivated, benefiting a significant number of (10.862) agricultural stakeholders in the Kurdistan Region through the provision of wheat at subsidized rates, drawing from a budget allocation of (2%). Notably, the Kurdistan Region hosts (4) pumping facilities administered by the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources, strategically located across (Erbil, Sulaimani, Duhok, and Garmian), boasting a collective cleansing capacity of 40,000 metric tons per season. Additionally, the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources maintains a catalog of 20 officially sanctioned wheat varieties, subject to annual updates through provincial agricultural research initiatives and subsequent dissemination to farmers.

Grain Cultivation of Wheat and Barley

Approximately 50,000 agriculturists engage in grain cultivation across an expanse of roughly 2.5 million dunams of land in the Kurdistan Region. Their collective efforts yield approximately 1 million tons of wheat and 250,000 tons of barley annually.

The fundamental entitlement to sustenance for every individual, particularly those facing socio-economic challenges and marginalized groups.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources is dedicated to enhancing the infrastructure for food security and addressing associated requisites, alongside sustained endeavors to fulfill the agricultural requisites crucial for the Iraqi government. These endeavors encompass incentives and assistance such as chemical fertilizers, pesticides, etc. Within the ambit of the Food Security Recovery Strategic Plan, commensurate services are envisaged for the central and southern Iraqi cities, aimed at bolstering agricultural output among farmers within the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG).

The impediments obstructing the realization of the right to food for all individuals, especially the disadvantaged and marginalized, are multifaceted. In the Kurdistan Region, these hurdles predominantly stem from financial constraints. Notably, the services extended by Iraq are disparate, with the Kurdistan Region often lacking comparable provisions.

Marketing of wheat from farmers in the Kurdistan Regional Government:

- The cultivated area for wheat encompasses approximately (2.599.580) acres.
- At the regional level, (38.948) farmers have participated in the wheat marketing initiative.
- Wheat marketed from silos during the 9th cabinet tenure amounted to (1.189.102) tons.
- A private-sector wheat marketing endeavor facilitated the marketing of (85000) tons.
- The aggregate volume of marketed wheat during the ninth cabinet period totals (1.272.102) tons.

Supply of Wheat and Grain

In matters pertaining to food security, the paramount importance is accorded to grain, marking it as the cornerstone. Any nation capable of securing a reserve equivalent to two years' worth of wheat, along with adequate storage infrastructure, demonstrates a judicious food security strategy. Within the Kurdistan Region, staples such as wheat, rice, and barley assume vital roles in sustaining daily nourishment, with the government bearing the responsibility of ensuring their storage in requisite quantities.

- By the year 2023, the Kurdistan Region anticipates reaching a storage capacity of 585,000 metric tons for grain, complemented by tanker capacity amounting to 411,000 metric tons.
- The projected annual wheat demand in the Kurdistan Region stands at 640,000 tons.
- As of June 11, 2023, the grain intake from silos within the Kurdistan Region amounted to 13,090,545 tons.
- Based on data from food coupons, the current population of the region benefiting from food rations encompasses approximately 5,225,472 individuals.

Environmental conservation initiatives

The Ministry is currently engaged in the refinement of Directive No. (4) of 2021, aimed at modifying Directive No. (8) of 2013 concerning the enforcement of Forest Law provisions within the Kurdistan Region under the auspices of Directive No. (10) of 2021. As a participant in the High Committee, the Ministry has significantly contributed to arboreal proliferation, the augmentation of verdant areas, and the mitigation of adverse impacts stemming from elevated temperatures, water scarcity, and aridity.

On the contrary, it continues to advance nursery cultivation and distribute saplings to agriculturists and project stakeholders while safeguarding both natural and cultivated forests in collaboration with pertinent entities within the Kurdistan Regional Government.

- Embarking on the "Arborize" initiative in 2023, the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources launched a nationwide endeavor to furnish (one million) trees and saplings encompassing (35) diverse species.
- Securing backing from the Ministry of Agriculture of Turkey, the Consulate General of Turkey facilitated the provision of (50) thousand trees within the ambit of the "Nafas" project, aimed at enriching Kurdistan's environmental landscape.
- Revitalizing nurseries and woodlands in partnership with international bodies to enhance producers' capacity and product quality while safeguarding Kurdistan's verdant expanse.
- Participating in a delegation to the Climate Change Summit (COP 28) in the UAE to observe and garner support from participating nations for implementing measures to combat climate change in Kurdistan's ecosystem.
- Formulating a technical memorandum of understanding with the World Food Program (WFP) to invigorate the economy and enhance climate resilience in the region.
- Over the course of the past quadrennial, approximately (2.5 million) trees and saplings have been cultivated through forest and horticultural nurseries under this administration's auspices, significantly contributing to the greening of Kurdistan's environment and the fight against climate change.
- Spearheading a national tree planting initiative by furnishing around 500,000 trees gratuitously.
- Orchestrating the planting of (3) thousand trees, designated as the Penjwen City of Learning initiative, led by environmental advocates.
- Provision of trees to all governmental offices and agricultural stakeholders.
- Dispensing trees to agricultural and environmental organizations, as well as civil society at large.

Wildlife and Avian Conservation

In accordance with Environmental Legislation No. 8 of 2008 and Forestry and Forest Protection Legislation No. 10 of 2012, the Ministry holds membership within the committee dedicated to safeguarding wild fauna and avian species. Presently, a distinct committee is actively engaged in the preservation of wildlife and has implemented a series of measures in this regard.

Clearing Ministry territory of mines and explosives

- The Ministry of Agriculture collaborates with the Mine Authority to neutralize ordnance in semi-rural orchards situated in mountainous regions, facilitating the reclamation of mined land. This process encompasses the eradication of explosive hazards, land clearance operations, and efforts toward land rehabilitation, thereby mitigating risks to the agricultural pursuits of communities in the Kurdistan Region.
- The cumulative expanse of land rendered safe from mines and explosives now stands at (2.326.404) square kilometers, encompassing 47 demarcated minefields and 7 military installations. These areas have been formally relinquished and are now available for agricultural, pastoral, and industrial utilization.

Return expired merchandise to the port of entry.

- In compliance with the statutes outlined in Law No. (68) of 1937 concerning Animal and Veterinary Diseases, Law No. (17) of 1966 addressing Agricultural Quarantine, and the subsequent amendments as stipulated in Law No. (76) In 2012, coupled with the establishment of robust protocols for border inspection and product quality assurance for imports, the Ministry diligently oversees the repatriation of expired merchandise to their respective points of origin.
- Comprehensive agricultural, veterinary, fruit, and vegetable quarantine facilities are operational at the borders of the Kurdistan Region, ensuring thorough scrutiny of all incoming consignments.
- Oversight and quality assurance committees stationed within the quarantine facilities maintain vigilant supervision over goods deemed unsuitable for entry into the Kurdistan Region. Consequently, any such items are promptly confiscated and repatriated to their countries of origin.

Water Resource Safeguarding

The Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources within the ninth cabinet has undertaken significant initiatives concerning water resource management and addressing the overall water situation, encompassing both surface and groundwater domains. These measures include:

- Enactment of the Water Resource Safeguarding and Management Strategy Law No. (4) of 2022, ratified by the Kurdistan Parliament.
- Issuance of directives regarding the construction of water reservoirs and irrigation schemes by the Kurdistan Parliament under Decree No. (5) in 2022.
- In tandem with Iraq's existing strategic dams (Dukan, Darbandikhan, and Duhok), the decision to construct an additional 13 dams has been made, with most nearing completion, significantly augmenting water retention capacity.
- Approval within the ninth cabinet of the Kurdistan Regional Government for the design and implementation of (41) water reservoirs and irrigation projects spanning the period of (2019-2022). Prior cabinets oversaw the construction of (118) similar projects, totaling (155) installations covering an area of (479,364) acres, capable of accommodating (22,613,215) cubic meters of water.
- Empowerment of local farmers and agricultural stakeholders to construct water reservoirs tailored to their needs, facilitated by the General Directorate of Water Resources through the provision of necessary resources and expert guidance.
- Establishment of a high-level committee and operational unit tasked with formulating plans, programs, and recommendations to address drought conditions and mitigate water scarcity. Three comprehensive reports have been compiled and presented to the Council of Ministers and relevant bodies, focusing on Planning and Oversight, Dam Infrastructure, and Water Resource Management.

- Collaboration efforts with the private sector, institutions, and international investors through the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) framework to engage in dam construction and irrigation projects. Proposals from over 60 companies worldwide have been received for the design and construction of (9) strategically vital dams.
- Execution of a memorandum of understanding with the international conglomerate (Power China) for the construction of (4) critical and strategic dams in the Kurdistan Region.
- Establishment of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources of the Kurdistan Region and Iraqi Water Resources, aimed at fostering coordination in water security management strategies and addressing water-related concerns in both Iraq and the Kurdistan Region.

Reservoirs and Aquifers

- A total of six reservoirs, boasting a collective storage capacity of 35.8 million cubic meters, have been successfully commissioned under this administration.
- Additionally, there are eleven ongoing reservoir projects, anticipated to contribute a combined storage capacity of 250.6 million cubic meters upon completion.
- The implementation of 116 pond construction initiatives has been accomplished, with 39 projects currently underway and 137 projects awaiting further consideration.
- As of the conclusion of 2023, a total of 27,171 water wells have been officially licensed within the jurisdiction, encompassing 10,734 designated for potable water, 12,563 for agricultural purposes, and 3,874 for industrial utilization.

Causes of shortfall in red meat production:

- Inadequate allocation of agricultural subsidies to bolster the farming and livestock sectors.
- Escalating production expenses attributed to the rising costs of forage components, notably premixes, soybeans, oils, and proteins, on a global scale.
- Economic disparities are exacerbated by currency fluctuations and the repercussions of the ongoing conflict between Russia and Ukraine.
- Ramifications of climate change, including droughts and dwindling water levels.
- Urban expansion and insufficient provisions for essential services and consumption funding.

Construction of shelters for stray canines

In pursuit of this objective, a collaborative committee has been established comprising the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources, provincial authorities, autonomous administrations, and municipal entities. This committee aims to establish shelters tailored to accommodate stray canines, particularly given the prevailing circumstances. Within the Kurdistan Region, the proliferation of stray canines within urban areas has become a notable concern, at times resulting in unfortunate incidents such as fatalities and attacks due to the absence of comprehensive care protocols.

Notwithstanding resource constraints and the scarcity of facilities for service provision and oversight teams, the Ministry has proactively facilitated collaboration with international organizations specializing in animal welfare, leveraging available support channels.

Lands of Halabja

It is imperative to establish distinct directives concerning the lands of Halabja, given that the predominant land use in this region pertains to agriculture. Particular considerations and accommodations should be extended when contemplating the acquisition or utilization of these lands.

Collaboration with International organizations

The Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources engages in collaborative efforts with numerous international entities to secure both financial and technical assistance. This partnership facilitates the implementation of educational courses, training sessions, and research endeavors that run concurrently with the Ministry's strategic plans and programs. Notable partners include (JICA, FAW, WFP, UNDP, USAID, GIZ, ZOA, COWATER, WHH, IOM, IFB, ILO).

The 9th cabinet has facilitated various educational initiatives, including:

- A total of 91 research courses have been attended by over 396 farmers and employees.
- 329 agricultural guidance courses, benefiting 8270 farmers and employees.
- 248 agricultural guidance seminars, with participation from 4825 farmers and employees.
- Organizing 5 field day seminars, attended by more than 130 individuals.
- Hosting 20 workshops, benefitting 400 employees and farmers.
- Delivering both theoretical and practical training sessions to approximately 10,000 graduates from agriculture, livestock, and veterinary departments, in alignment with the provisions outlined in Law No. 20 and Guideline No. 4 pertaining to the recruitment of supervisors for private-sector agricultural projects.

Necessary steps to enact the recommendations put forth by the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources:

In response to a series of collaborative workshops and roundtable discussions, the Office of the Coordinator for International Advocacy has formulated specific directives. These directives, sanctioned by the Office of the Prime Minister, have been communicated to relevant stakeholders, including the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources. They are designed to align with international best practices and are integral to the overarching timeline outlined in the strategic plan.

- Collaboration with the Federal Government is paramount to rejuvenating food security efforts in the Kurdistan Region. It is imperative to address common challenges and issues while upholding the welfare of citizens and farmers in the region.

- The Federal Government is urged to furnish chemical fertilizers, medications, and vaccines to bolster agricultural productivity among farmers in alignment with the Food Security Program. This aligns with initiatives supporting farmers across central and southern Iraq.
- Strengthening border control infrastructure for agricultural, botanical, and zoological quarantine is essential. This entails augmenting systems, personnel, and expertise at border checkpoints.
- A unified vision among Kurdistan Regional Government entities is indispensable in formulating a cohesive national strategy for ensuring food security for the region's populace.
- Enhancing the competitiveness of both plant and animal production is vital to fortifying food security. This involves addressing existing vulnerabilities within the agricultural sector.

For the enhancement of the water sector, the following measures are recommended:

- Facilitate the reorganization of the water sector, fostering collaboration among stakeholders at various tiers including proprietors, policymakers, administrators, and water consumers, amalgamating them within a unified authority.
- Review and refine the existing water legislation alongside other pertinent laws and regulations associated with water management.
- Enhance the issuance and adaptation of statutes and directives pertaining to irrigation fees and infrastructure maintenance.
- Mitigate reliance on antiquated irrigation systems while advocating for the adoption of contemporary and intelligent irrigation technologies to optimize water utilization.
- Emphasize the practice of water harvesting, mandating the integration of at least one irrigation initiative concurrent with the construction of each dam.
- Strategize to maximize land irrigation by leveraging groundwater resources.
- Promote the construction of a multitude of reservoirs, recognizing their multifaceted utility in water retention, groundwater purification, and irrigation, while acknowledging the comparative cost-effectiveness vis-à-vis larger infrastructural projects.
- Anticipate acute water scarcity challenges in approximately 800 villages across the Kurdistan Region within the forthcoming years, necessitating preemptive measures such as the establishment of localized reservoirs for each community.
- Safeguard groundwater reservoirs through the imposition of restrictions on well drilling activities, acknowledging their vulnerability to irreversible depletion despite their geological formation spanning millennia.
- Facilitate private sector involvement in the management of water resources, fostering innovation and efficiency.
- Adhere to a framework where water allocation is contingent upon both economic viability and ecological sustainability, dissuading its utilization for endeavors of marginal value.

For the betterment of farmers and the agricultural and irrigation sectors in the Kurdistan Region:

- Ensuring the entitlements of farmers residing beyond the administrative purview of the Kurdistan Regional Government, particularly those of Kurdish origin, who face infringements upon their land rights.
- Obstacles hindering the export and sale of agricultural produce cultivated by farmers under the jurisdiction of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) to regions in central and southern Iraq, leading to substantial financial setbacks for KRG-affiliated farmers.
- Instances of non-compliance by neighboring nations, notably Iran and Turkey, concerning equitable resource allocation and the regulated release of water from the Zey Bachuk and Sirwan rivers, resulting in the infringement upon the rights of farmers within the Kurdistan Region.

In consideration of the welfare of farmers and the continued advancement of the agricultural and irrigation sectors within the Kurdistan Region, it is imperative to:

- Safeguard the entitlements of farmers residing beyond the jurisdiction of the Kurdistan Regional Government, who are Kurds and frequently encounter infringements upon their land rights.
- Address the recurring obstruction encountered by farmers under the governance of the Kurdistan Regional Government in exporting and marketing their produce to urban centers in central and southern Iraq.
- Address instances of non-adherence by neighboring nations, particularly Iran and Turkey, to the principles of equitable neighboring relations and the equitable distribution of water resources from the Zey Bachuk and Sirwan rivers. Such actions not only contravene the rights of farmers within the Kurdistan Region but also deny them the agricultural support afforded to farmers in other regions of central and southern Iraq.

Ministry of Trade and Industry

Out of the (6) recommendations submitted to the Ministry of Trade and Industry in 2022, (4) recommendations have been implemented, (1) recommendation has not been implemented and (1) recommendation was in the process of implementation. Compared to 2023, the implemented recommendations have increased to (5) recommendations and the non-implemented recommendations have disappeared, and the recommendations in the implementation stage remain the same, which is (1) recommendation. In this regard the implementation rate becomes (91.7%).

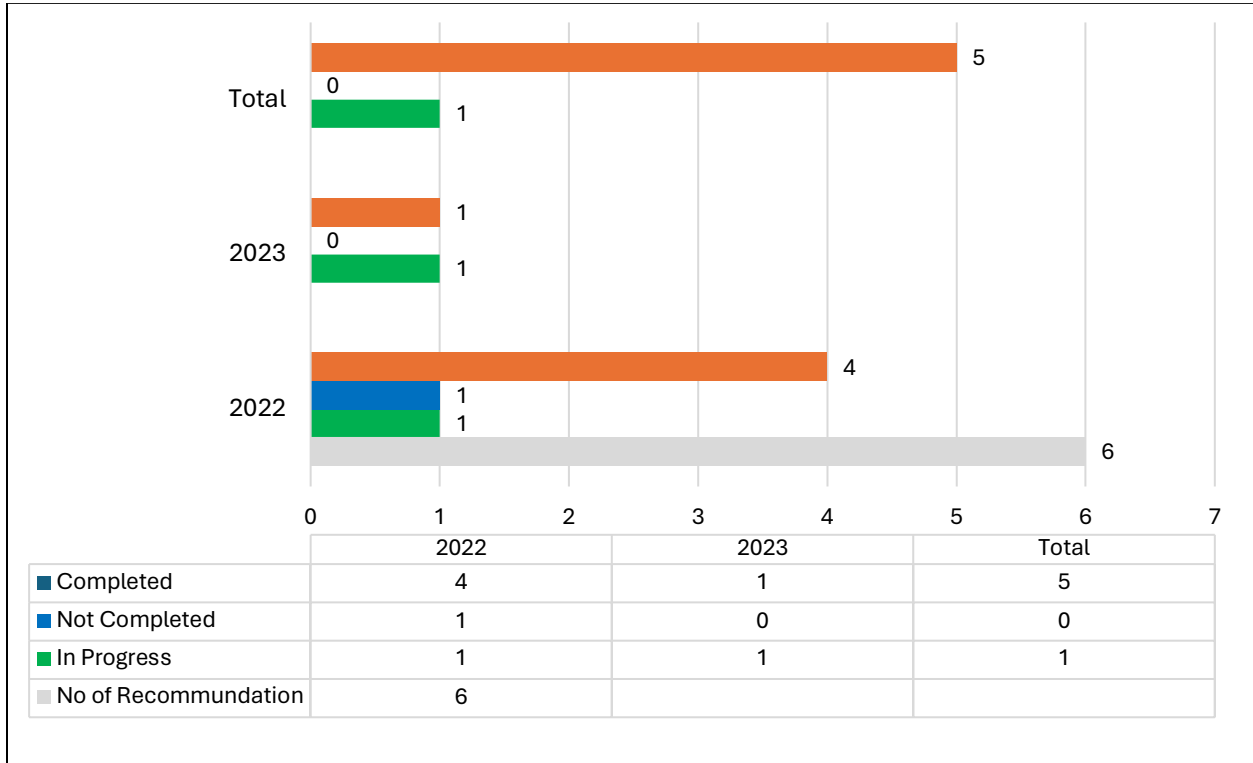


Figure 50: Implementation of Recommendations Related to the Ministry of Trade and Industry

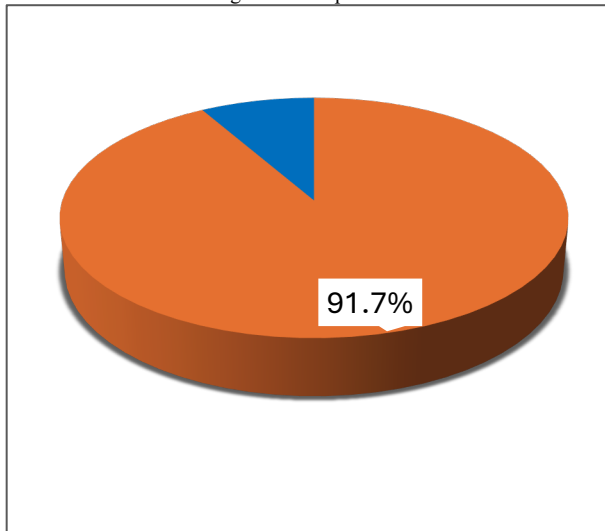


Figure-51 Rates of recommendation execution for 2022-2023

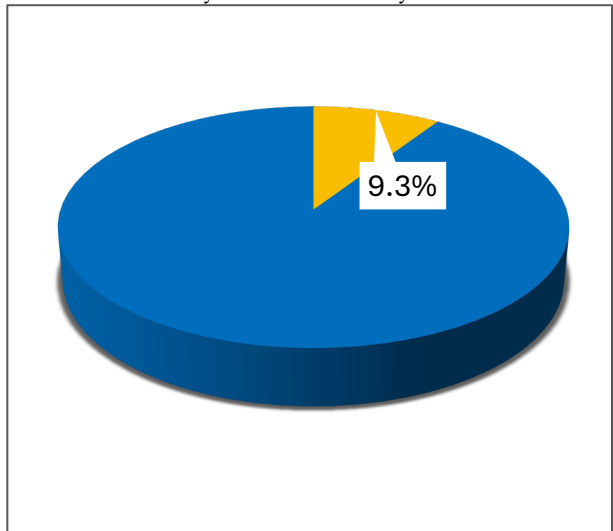


Figure-52 Effort rate of the ministry to completed the recommendations

Implemented Recommendations:

1. Foster initiatives aimed at realizing the strategic objectives pertaining to recovery and food security for the period spanning 2018 to 2022.
2. Sustain endeavors towards the attainment of the Nutrition and Food Safety Strategy outlined for the years 2018 to 2022.
3. Repatriate expired commodities to their countries of origin rather than resorting to their disposal within the region's borders.
4. Ensure comprehensive assistance for displaced individuals in territories under the influence of ISIS, encompassing provisions for potable water, sanitation facilities, nutritional sustenance, and bolstering medical facilities within refugee settlements.
5. Address the issue of excessive utilization of plastic materials and promote their sustainable management, including recycling measures.

Recommendations Under Consideration for Implementation:

1. Enhance endeavors within the scope of the public distribution system initiative to actualize the entitlement to sustenance for all citizens, particularly those facing deprivation and marginalization.

Below are the measures, laws, guidelines, procedures, and practical steps taken in implementing the international recommendations:

Revision of legislation pertaining to the commercial and industrial sectors.

Legislative modifications include:

- Revision of the Domestic Product Safeguarding Act (Act No. 2 of 2021).
- Amendments to the Industrial Advancement Legislation (Act No. 20 of 1998), enacted through Act No. 13 of 2021.
- Refinements to the Ministry of Trade and Industry Statute (Act No. 10 of 2010), established by Act No. 14 of 2021.
- Updates to the Iraqi Commercial Statute, with the incorporation of Law No. 30 of 1984, facilitated by Act No. 15 of 2021.

Adherence to the following regulations is imperative:

- Legislation concerning the establishment of organized industrial cities and zones.
- Free Services Industrial and Commercial Zones (Free Economic Zones) Act.
- Legislation pertaining to Quality Control.
- Bill concerning Food and Drug Establishments.
- Amendment to Commercial Power of Attorney Act.

- Legislation regarding the enforcement of regulations for foreign subsidiaries.
- Import and Export Legislation within the Kurdistan Region.
- The Financial Support of Industrial and Commercial Projects Act.

The establishment of a job and business information center aimed at providing employment opportunities for young individuals contributes significantly to the reduction of unemployment rates, thereby directly mitigating instances of violence, criminal activities, and breaches of legal statutes.

Food Security

The Ministry of Trade and Industry assumes a pivotal role in ensuring the provision of essential foodstuffs to the populace, as part of its commitment to fostering food security through the strategic establishment of silos and warehouses.

Presently, the Kurdistan Region boasts a storage capacity of (585) thousand tons of grains, encompassing even remote areas, with the completion of three silos, each capable of holding (120) thousand tons, located in Qushtapa, Kalar, and Roviya. Additionally, there exist 100 warehouses dedicated to food storage. It is anticipated that within the ensuing three years, at least three more silos will be erected across the Kurdistan Region.

In both the immediate and long-term horizons, the Ministry is dedicated to advancing the economic landscape of the Kurdistan Region, ensuring equitable economic prosperity for all citizens. This endeavor entails fostering industrial growth and orchestrating business activities conducive to elevating the collective national income and individual earnings.

Such measures are anticipated to stimulate the export of manufactured goods and maintain a delicate equilibrium between imports and exports, thereby safeguarding the Kurdistan Region's economic vitality against stagnation and inflationary pressures.

At present, the Ministry of Trade and Industry oversees ten ongoing initiatives encompassing the construction of silos, industrial zones, and the refurbishment of various laboratories. In alignment with its strategic vision, the ministry had envisaged approximately 29 medium and large-scale projects spanning the period from 2020 to 2024, including the establishment of four industrial zones in Sulaimani and Duhok, alongside numerous private warehouses, training facilities, and laboratories.

Looking ahead to 2024, the Ministry is poised to execute 22 medium and large-scale endeavors, encompassing the construction of five silos in Halabja, Kufri, Harir, Koya, and Zakho, in tandem with the establishment of 12 industrial zones across Erbil, Sulaimani, Duhok, and Halabja provinces, alongside investment facilitation initiatives, private warehousing facilities, training centers, and laboratories.

Licensing of factories and companies between 2022 and 2023

- During 2022, the Kurdistan Region witnessed the licensing of a significant number of factories, totaling (4212) establishments, with an aggregate investment of approximately (2)

billion and (237) million dollars. By the conclusion of 2023, this figure escalated to (4498) licensed factories, reflecting an invested sum of (1,064,274,000) dinars.

- In the year 2022, the Ministry of Trade and Industry recorded the registration of (31,824) companies, predominantly comprising domestic entities, which accounted for 94% of the total, with the remaining 6% representing foreign enterprises. By the end of 2023, this registry expanded to encompass (35,048) companies, predominantly domestic at (90%), alongside a noteworthy presence of foreign firms at (10%).
- The operational landscape during this period welcomed over (3400) foreign companies, constituting (40%) of registered brands engaged in various sectors such as foodstuffs, automobiles...etc.
- Of the \$11 billion total trade volume observed at the Ibrahim Khalil Gate, the Kurdistan Region's share approximates \$5 billion, indicating a substantial contribution to regional trade dynamics.

Development and establishment of silos

- The Ministry of Trade and Industry is currently overseeing 14 active initiatives focused on the construction of storage facilities, and industrial zones, as well as the refurbishment and creation of various research laboratories.
- Over the course of 2020-2024, the Ministry aims to execute 23 medium and large-scale endeavors. These include the erection of five storage facilities in Kufri, Halabja, Harir, Zakho, and Koya, alongside the establishment of four industrial zones in Erbil, Sulaimani, Duhok, Halabja, as well as several private warehouses, training centers, and laboratories.
- In alignment with the Ministry of Trade and Industry's strategic initiatives, five additional storage facilities are slated for construction between 2020 and 2025. These endeavors are projected to augment storage capacity to 785,000 tons by the close of 2025.

Utilization and recycling of Plastic Resources

In addressing the prevalent utilization of plastic materials and their subsequent recycling, the Ministry of Trade and Industry, guided by the directives of the Ministry, aims to administer licenses for commercial and industrial endeavors. These licenses stipulate that a minimum of (20%) of designated land areas must be allocated to green initiatives, specifically for the recycling of plastic waste. This endeavor endeavors to uphold environmental cleanliness and promote the reusability of plastic materials.

Reinstatement of Expired Merchandise

With respect to merchandise received at border checkpoints that fail to adhere to Iraqi regulatory standards, a protocol is enacted wherein such items are repatriated to their respective countries of origin and destroyed there.

Supply of Wheat and Grain

- In the realm of food security, grain stands paramount, and any nation capable of sustaining a two-year supply of wheat with adequate storage facilities is deemed to have effectively executed a comprehensive food security strategy.
- As of 2023, the Kurdistan Region boasts a storage capacity for (585,000) thousand tons of grain, with current storage occupancy totaling (382,000) tons.
- Within the Kurdistan Region, wheat, rice, and barley constitute fundamental staples for daily sustenance, and it falls within the government's purview to ensure adequate storage. The annual wheat demand in the Kurdistan Region is estimated at 640,000 tons.
- On June 11, 2023, a consignment of wheat totaling (499.633) tons was received from the Kurdistan Region's silo.
- Based on data from food coupons, the population of the region is projected to reach (5,309,293) million individuals eligible for food rations in 2023.

Construction and refurbishment of silos

- As of the conclusion of 2019, the storage capacity for foodstuffs within silos amounted to 361,000 tons. In accordance with the Ministry's agenda and the endorsement of projects, it is anticipated to elevate this capacity to surpass 448,000 tons by the culmination of 2025.
- Presently, the Ministry of Trade and Industry is engaged in eight ongoing initiatives concerning the erection of silos and industrial precincts, alongside the refurbishment and establishment of various research facilities.
- Within the years 2022 to 2024, the Ministry has earmarked 27 significant undertakings, including the construction of five silos in Kufri, Halabja, Harir, Zakho, and Koya.
- The development of four industrial zones in Erbil, Sulaimani, Duhok, and Halabja is underway, in addition to multiple privately owned warehouses, educational centers, and research laboratories.
- Pursuant to the Ministry of Trade and Industry's initiatives, five novel silos are slated for construction between 2020 and 2025. By the end of 2025, these silos will collectively accommodate a storage capacity of 785,000 tons.

Job creation between 2022 and 2023:

- Throughout 2022, (4212) manufacturing establishments have been officially registered in the Kurdistan Region, contributing to the emergence of (44203) employment opportunities. Forecasts indicate an escalation in job figures, projecting an upsurge to (49,757) by the end of 2023, primarily propelled by the expansion of industrial infrastructure.
- Under the auspices of the ninth cabinet, a series of industrial enterprises have received formal authorization, resulting in the generation of (15,189) gainful positions.
- In pursuit of fostering an environment conducive to enhanced employment prospects, the Council of Ministers promulgated Decision No. (172) on 20/9/2022. This directive

mandates that indigenous labor and workforce representation within enterprises should not fall below 75%, thereby prioritizing domestic employment initiatives.

International Organizations Collaboration

From 2022 through the end of March 2023, a series of collaborative workshops and training sessions were conducted between the Ministry of Trade and Industry and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), including:

- An Industrial Zones Legislation Enhancement Course for Iraq and the Kurdistan Region Government (KRG) held from October to December 2022.
- A workshop organized in partnership with the Jordan Industrial Zones and Chamber of Industries, generously funded by the Italian Republic, conducted from March 12th to 16th, 2023.
- An E-Commerce Training Course held in April 2022.
- A Training Course for Investment Promotion Consultants conducted in June 2022.

Ministry of Transport and Communication

Out of the (6) recommendations submitted to the Ministry of Transportation in 2022, (2) recommendations have been implemented and (4) recommendations have not been implemented. Compared to 2023, the number of implemented recommendations decreased to (2) recommendations and the number of recommendations not implemented decreased to (1) recommendation, and the number of recommendations in the process of implementation reached (3) recommendations. In this regard the implementation rate becomes (58.3%).

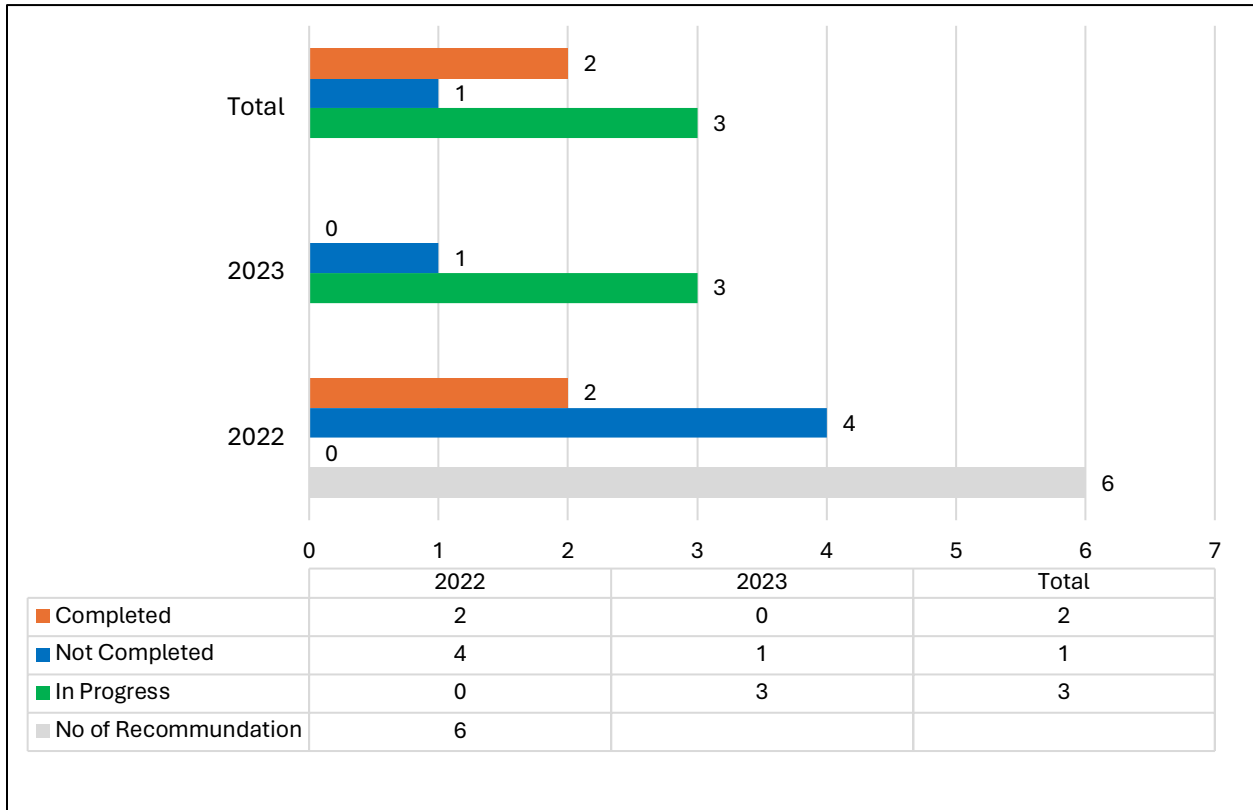


Figure 53: Implementation of Recommendations Related to the Ministry of Transport and Communication

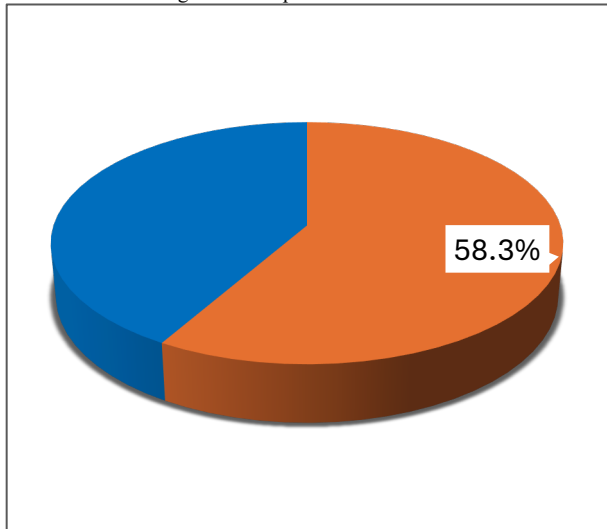


Figure-54 Rates of recommendation execution for 2022-2023

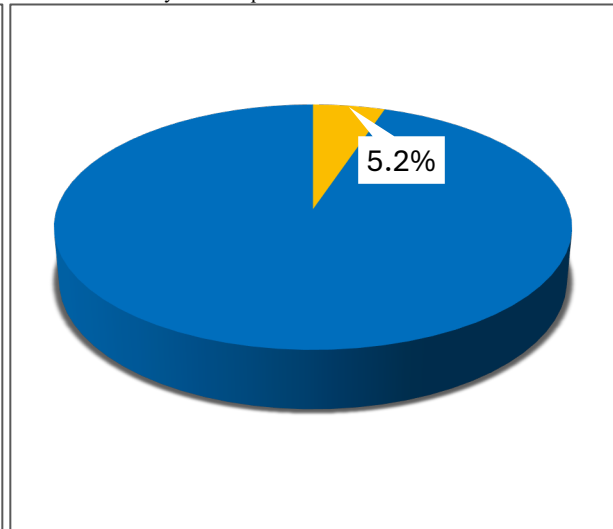


Figure-55 Effort rate of the ministry to completed the recommendations

Implemented Recommendations

1. Enforce requisite protocols to forestall the unauthorized manipulation of mobile SIM cards, ensuring adherence to established legal frameworks, thereby compelling compliance among mobile service providers.
2. Institute judicial recourse against individuals engaging in the improper utilization of electronic apparatus, encompassing wireless technologies, cyberspace, or electronic mail, for the purposes of intimidation, infringement upon the liberties of others, or jeopardizing national security and societal ethics.

Unmet Recommendations

1. Formulate a plan aimed at offering direct supportive methodologies, mobile applications, adept sign language interpreters, and supplementary resources to facilitate seamless access to edifices, establishments, public transit, and information and communication technology services.

Recommendations Under Consideration for Implementation:

1. Enhance the accessibility of educational facilities for children with disabilities, equip educators with requisite skills to cater to their needs, and ensure the provision of tailored developmental services aligning with the principles outlined in paragraph (4) of Article (40) of the Figure er.
2. Mitigate and counteract cyber-terrorist activities through the establishment of preemptive measures, including the enactment of dedicated legislation targeting such offenses.
3. Operationalize a dedicated helpline for reporting incidents of domestic violence, ensuring its accessibility to individuals with disabilities.

Below are the measures, laws, guidelines, procedures, and practical steps taken in implementing the international recommendations:

Provide tailored services for children with disabilities.

In order to enhance the accessibility of educational institutions for children with disabilities, it is advisable to suggest that transportation companies serving students, under the auspices of the Ministry of Transportation, allocate designated spaces on their buses. Moreover, offering financial assistance to mitigate transportation expenses is recommended.

Furthermore, the Ministry has devised the (City Bus) initiative, with forthcoming attention dedicated to ensuring seating and amenities cater to individuals with disabilities.

Regarding individuals with autism spectrum disorder, in accordance with Ministerial Decree No. 12 dated 3/2/2022, concerted efforts are underway to streamline procedures for autism patients and their families at airports. Expedited processes are being established to accommodate individuals with disabilities at airports within a concise timeframe.

Secure a direct line of communication

With regard to the establishment of an expedited hotline for reporting instances of domestic violence targeting individuals with disabilities, the Ministry of Transportation and Communications stands prepared to address any requisitions from the ministries and agencies of the Kurdistan Regional Government. Collaborative efforts will be undertaken to execute requisite actions in tandem with the Federal Iraqi Information and Communications Commission. This hotline service will be furnished in adherence to the stipulations outlined in the (National Numbering Plan) and will utilize abbreviated numerical codes as prescribed.

Misuse of electronic devices

In addressing instances of electronic device misuse, it is imperative to uphold the principles outlined in Law No. (6) of (2008) within the Kurdistan Region. This legislation meticulously delineates transgressions and corresponding repercussions. To further fortify regulatory measures, directives were disseminated to govern the sale of SIM cards within the region, as delineated in the Kurdistan Gazette No. (272) dated 12/10/2021. Nevertheless, there remains a pressing need for legislation dedicated to eradicating and countering cyber-terrorism offenses.

The mandate of the Ministry of Transport and Communications encompasses collaborating with pertinent authorities to furnish comprehensive data regarding the IP addresses of suspected parties, facilitated through transportation entities, in response to potential cyber threats such as accusations or defamation, as delineated in Article 2 of the legislation in force.

Numerous deliberations have been convened for this purpose:

- On the 12th of July 2023, at the behest of the Prosecutor General, a session was convened at the Prosecutor General's Office to foster synergy among security agencies and corporate entities (Internet and Mobile), with participation from the Ministry of Transport. Attendees included security agencies, the Ministry of Interior, mobile service providers, and internet service providers. The session aimed to elucidate prevailing challenges and solicit perspectives on the misuse of courier services and the proliferation of online gambling platforms. It was observed that a majority of criminal activities and assaults are perpetrated through internet-based services.
- On 17/7/2023, a subsequent meeting was convened to address the detailed requisition of security forces for essential company data, attended by the Ministry of Transportation, security agencies, and the Prosecutor General.
- During this gathering, the Prosecutor General's representative broached concerns regarding the postal domain and strategies to curtail the transportation of contraband. The Ministry of Transport and Communications elucidated the proposed postal regulations of the Kurdistan Region, mandating licensed entities to deploy sonar equipment for inspecting transported goods and correspondence.
- A session was convened on the 6th of August 2023 at the Erbil General Directorate of Security. Security delegates proposed engaging in dialogues with licensed internet service providers (LTE) to enhance coordination between security agencies and these entities,

ensuring timely information exchange in accordance with prevailing legislation in the Kurdistan Region.

- On the 9th of August 2023, a joint meeting was held involving the Ministry, the Prosecutor General, security agencies, and all licensed LTE internet service providers. The objective was to directly address security agencies' requisites with the service providers, fostering collaboration and mutual resolution of issues. It was agreed that companies should actively engage and collaborate with security agencies, leading to the establishment of a direct coordination mechanism between these entities.
- As the Ministry of Transport and Communications, we underscored three key tenets during the coordination efforts between security agencies and licensed LTE internet service providers:
 - Establishment of collaboration and cooperation in the public interest.
 - Adherence to all legal requisitions and procedures.
 - Ensuring technical feasibility of all requests.

Mitigate the issue of unauthorized SIM card distribution

In a concerted effort to address the unauthorized distribution of SIM cards through channels outside legal frameworks, posing significant concerns for public welfare and national security, the Ministry of Interior, in collaboration with the Ministry of Transportation, enacted Ministerial Decree No. (22135) on 2/1/2021. This decree established a dedicated committee comprising representatives from the Ministry of Transportation, Asayesh, and Police across various provinces and autonomous administrations.

The committee's mandate encompasses vigilant oversight to ensure adherence to established protocols. Notably, in Erbil alone, 995 unauthorized SIM cards were confiscated by the close of 2022, underscoring the ongoing commitment to curtail this practice. Throughout 2023, the Special Market Monitoring Committee conducted several targeted operations resulting in the seizure of (2519) illicit SIM cards, further demonstrating steadfast efforts to uphold regulatory standards.

The esteemed High Committee tasked with overseeing the Implementation of Decision (110) on 1/ 9/ 2023 regarding the protocol for SIM card sales, in alignment with directives (8) of (2021) and (9) of 2022, convened several sessions. As a result, the ensuing measures were enacted:

- It has been mandated that licensed telecommunication and internet entities compile a comprehensive dossier of all decrees (primary and ancillary) for submission to the Ministry of Interior/B. Security and Licensing Companies.
- Telecommunication and internet service providers are enjoined to demonstrate full compliance with our directives to obtain official authorization for SIM card distribution.
- Following deliberations with the Ministry of Interior, a consensus was reached to execute the registration processes across all provinces and autonomous administrations by 31/12/2023. Pursuant to the overarching communication referenced as General Letter No. (30449) dated 26/10/2023, all internal affairs departments in the provinces and autonomous

administrations are entrusted with finalizing the registration procedures up to the point of acquiring licenses and associated fees, subsequently forwarding these to the Ministry of Interior's Bureau/B. Security Companies and Licensing for licensing in accordance with statutory provisions and guidelines.

- To facilitate this endeavor, the Ministry of Interior, through their communications referenced as No. (3961) (3962) (3963) (3964) (3965) (3966) (3967) on 12/11/2023, has apprised all concerned entities to expedite the requisite processes by notifying all decrees and, as per their geographical distribution, arranging visits to internal affairs offices in the provinces and autonomous administrations to conclude the registration formalities. Concurrently, oversight committees tasked with monitoring vendors and regulating SIM card sales mechanisms in all regions are urged to sustain their efforts.
- On Wednesday, 22/ 11/ 2023, a collaborative session convened at the Office of the Prosecutor General, bringing together representatives from our Ministry, the Prosecutor General's office, security agencies, and all licensed telecommunication service providers (mobile). The aim was to engage in constructive dialogue regarding the security agencies' requirements directly with the companies and address pertinent issues.
- In accordance with the companies' statements, there is a commitment to liaise and collaborate with security agencies to identify individuals engaged in illicit activities via SIM cards or the Internet, posing threats to societal well-being and national security. It has been resolved to establish a direct channel of coordination between security agencies and licensed telecommunication service providers (mobile), with a clear emphasis that all requests will necessitate judicial approval, ensuring strict adherence to legal protocols throughout all procedures.

Facilitate disclosure regarding the IP address of the party under suspicion.

In terms of collaborating with pertinent authorities to disclose information concerning the IP address of the party under suspicion, as well as the detection of any cyber threats, the Ministry of Transportation has incorporated and instituted the Directorate of Social Media and Cyber Security within its revised framework. This directorate collaborates closely with the Ministry of Interior and pertinent stakeholders to thoroughly investigate and furnish details on this matter.

In the interest of public welfare and in alignment with the values cherished by Kurdistan society, the Ministry of Transportation has mandated licensed companies to introduce a specialized internet service package tailored for families, known as the "Family Package." In this package, several types of bad sites are filtered and blocked, including:

- Insulting religion and prophets, holy books, all religions and religions of Kurdistan.
- Undermining the security of coexistence and society and spreading hatred, division, and violence (religious, ethnic, etc...).
- Access to explicit content, particularly websites featuring sexual material.
- Facilitation of the trade and exchange of weaponry and ammunition.
- Participation in gambling activities, whether electronic or involving physical items.

- Transactions involving electronic currencies in any form.
- Promotion and advertising of tobacco and alcoholic beverages.
- Discussion or promotion of illicit drugs in any context.
- Promotion or advocacy of domestic violence, encompassing all forms of abuse within familial environments, including instances of child mistreatment.
- Cruelty towards animals in any form.

Companies that have offered family internet packages to citizens:

- Tarin Net.
- Fast Link.
- Nortel.
- Tişk Net.
- Seven Net Layers

Communications.

Following an extensive series of workshops and roundtable discussions, the Office of the Coordinator for International Advocacy has formulated precise steps. These directives have been conveyed by the Office of the Prime Minister to pertinent stakeholders, including the Ministry of Transportation.

On the rights of individuals with disabilities:

- Offer accessible applications for smartphones, tablets, and other mobile devices, along with complimentary software, tailored to the diverse needs of individuals with disabilities.
- Implement clear signage within government premises to enhance accessibility for visitors with disabilities.
- Authorize the importation of vehicles specifically adapted for use by individuals with disabilities.
- Ensure the availability of specialized and economically feasible transportation services, including buses, for individuals with disabilities, visual impairments, and mobility challenges.
- Establish a dedicated helpline to promptly address and facilitate the reporting of instances of violence, ensuring accessibility for all individuals with disabilities.

Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs

Out of the (19) recommendations submitted to the Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs in 2022, (14) recommendations have been implemented, (2) recommendations have not been implemented and (3) recommendations were in the process of implementation. Compared to 2023, the number of implemented recommendations has increased to (15) recommendations, the number of non-implemented recommendations has decreased to (1) recommendation, and the number of recommendations under implementation are (3) recommendations. In this regard the implementation rate becomes (86.8%).

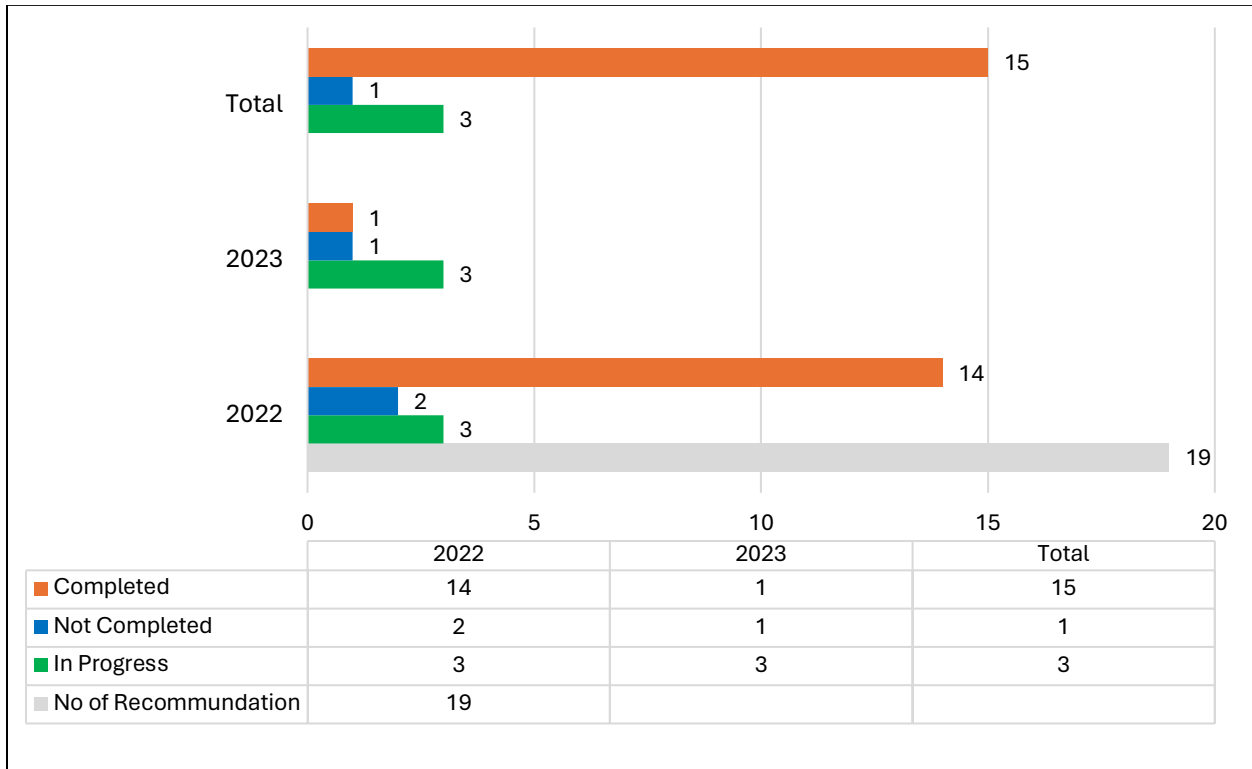


Figure 56: Implementation of Recommendations Related to the Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs

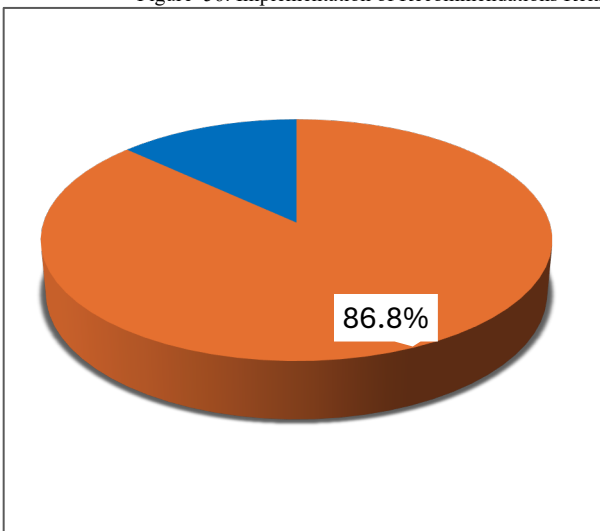


Figure-57 Rates of recommendation execution for 2022-2023

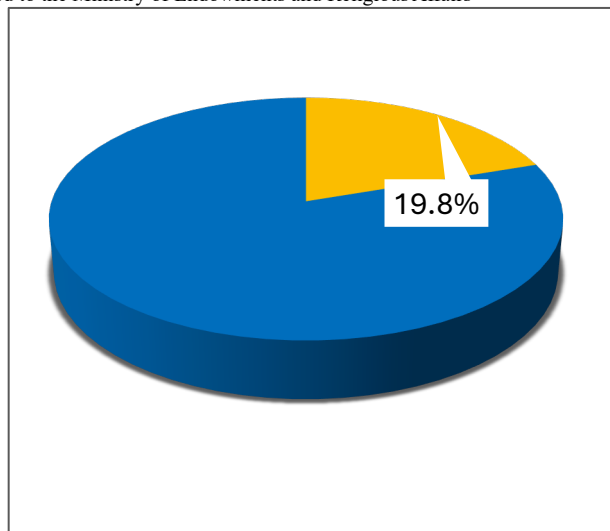


Figure-58 Effort rate of the ministry to completed the recommendations

Implemented Recommendations

1. Enact legislation to govern the entitlements delineated in Article 125 of the Constitution pertaining to local administrations. "This constitution shall protect the administrative, political, cultural, and educational rights of different nationalities such as Turkmen, Chaldeans, Assyrians, and other communities".
2. Fully integrate international accords concerning the eradication of all manifestations of gender disparity within the legal framework, thereby prioritizing such agreements over domestic legislation in instances of conflict.
3. Establish legal frameworks safeguarding the rights of religious minorities, thereby facilitating the unimpeded exercise of their freedom to practice their faith.
4. Institute legislation to deter and penalize acts of discrimination based on religion, belief, or sexual orientation.
5. Foster an ethos of non-discrimination, mutual respect, and tolerance, reflective of citizenship principles and appreciation for diversity. This can be achieved through heightened governmental initiatives, in collaboration with civil society organizations, aimed at propagating human rights awareness via educational programs. The implementation of such programs should involve the active engagement of national institutions and civil society entities.
6. Ensure equitable representation of gender and religious communities, encompassing minority women, across all elected bodies and public offices. This may entail requisite measures, including amendments to electoral statutes and mechanisms to ensure the representation of communities historically marginalized by the system.
7. Safeguard the heritage and cultural integrity of the Yazidi community.
8. Facilitate the participation of women, inclusive of those from religious, ethnic, and sectarian backgrounds, in international peace processes, transitional justice mechanisms, and national reconciliation endeavors.
9. Document and catalog information pertaining to complaints concerning racial discrimination received by the High Commission for Human Rights and local judicial bodies. This should encompass the outcomes of these complaints, including condemnatory rulings or disciplinary actions issued, as well as any compensation extended to victims.
10. Undertake all requisite measures to uphold human rights and fundamental freedoms for members of all communities.
11. Activate the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, with due consideration of the conclusive document from the Durban Conference.
12. Guarantee the freedom of religion and belief in Iraq, both in legal statutes and practical application, for adherents of all faiths.
13. Spearheaded initiatives to facilitate the reintegration and protection of groups and individuals from racial and religious communities, as well as those displaced by conflict, ensuring their access to legal services, including the issuance of official documentation.

14. Sustain efforts to foster tolerance and dialogue with the aim of preserving linguistic, religious, racial, and cultural diversity.
15. Bolster endeavors to investigate human rights violations perpetrated against the Yazidis, with a view to holding perpetrators accountable and safeguarding the religious, cultural, and material heritage of this community.

Unmet Recommendations:

1. Addressing the challenge of children born to ISIS fathers and Yazidi mothers with regards to religious and ethnic identity, while ensuring the safeguarding of non-Muslims within their faith until they reach maturity.

Recommendations Under Consideration for Implementation:

1. Revision of contentious constitutional clauses, notably Article 41: Affording Iraqis the freedom to adhere to personal statuses aligned with their religious beliefs and convictions, subject to legal regulation.
2. Promote an ethos of inclusivity and equality via expanded governmental initiatives, in conjunction with specific civil society entities.
3. Institute essential initiatives and bolster endeavors to enhance societal awareness regarding the perils associated with trafficking and the consumption of narcotics and psychotropic substances.

Below are the measures, laws, guidelines, procedures and practical steps taken in implementing the international recommendations:

Administrative and Legal Support for Communities Affairs

- The establishment of a dedicated ministry overseeing community affairs serves as a clear testament to the ninth cabinet's commitment to addressing communal issues. In the Kurdistan Region, community holidays hold the status of public holidays. The inclusion of representatives from the Jewish and Baha'i communities in Kurdistan signifies a bold stride towards ensuring the rights of all communities within the region without prejudice. Women from these communities also actively engage in political and economic spheres.
- Concerning the freedom to uphold personal status based on religious beliefs and individual choices, the Ministry of Endowments operates in accordance with Law No. (5) of 2015, which holds significant constitutional significance.
- In terms of local governance, the delineation of administrative districts, such as Ankawa and Khanke, within the Smel district of Duhok province has been executed. Additionally, the establishment of the Directorate of Endowments and Religious Affairs in Kirkuk and Makhmur district has been initiated.
- The groundbreaking ceremony for the church and headquarters of the Eastern Assyrian Patriarchate, situated in Erbil, marks a significant milestone in the global Assyrian community's presence.

- Presently, the Ministry of Endowments has drafted a new legislative proposal, which has been forwarded to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers for subsequent submission to the Kurdistan Parliament. This draft legislation aims to further enhance the environment of coexistence and safeguard the rights of religious communities, ensuring their comprehensive support across all aspects of life.
- As a gesture of respect for coexistence, a mosque has been established where religious sermons are delivered in Turkmen.
- Upholding the freedom to practice personal beliefs and observe religious status, the Ministry of Endowments operates in compliance with Law No. (5) of 2015, which embodies a constitutional legal framework.

Promote a culture of inclusivity, reverence, and acceptance

- In an effort to eradicate bias, the Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs has drafted legislation aimed at penalizing actions rooted in religious affiliation or conviction.
- The Ministry of Endowments endeavors to foster a culture of inclusivity, mutual respect, and tolerance through the formulation of educational initiatives. Special attention is given to the harmonization of religious discourse within Kurdistan's mosques, facilitated by the Friday Sermon Preparation Board under the auspices of the ninth cabinet. This initiative has significantly contributed to the delivery of moderate sermons and the cultivation of a climate of tolerance and reciprocal acknowledgment. Combatting discrimination stands as a pivotal theme within the ministry's strategic agenda.
- Annually, on October 27, the Kurdistan Region commemorates World Religious Freedom Day, drawing the participation of religious dignitaries and figures. The Ministry of Endowments actively engages in observing this occasion, hosting a dedicated event on May 22, 2022, to mark the World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development, inclusive of all religious and ethnic communities within the Kurdistan Region.
- The publication of a cultural compendium on religious harmony in the Kurdistan Region, available in Kurdish, Arabic, and English, serves to showcase numerous instances of coexistence within the region. This compilation was presented to His Holiness the Vatican during his historic visit to the region.
- In collaboration with the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry is committed to enforcing penalties against individuals who perpetrate unlawful acts under the guise of religion, thereby safeguarding societal harmony. Investigations into such transgressions are diligently pursued.

Protecting the religion, culture, and materials of the Yazidi community

- The Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs has undertaken efforts to officially recognize four Yazidi holidays alongside the New Year holiday across the region. Additionally, it has pursued the formal integration of Yazidi religious education into schools within Yazidi-populated areas. To streamline the issuance of official documentation, the Ministry's General Directorates of Christian and Yazidi Affairs collaborate with the Ministry of Interior and the Judicial Council. These initiatives will be executed in

consultation with representatives from diverse religious communities within the Ministry, ensuring cohesive coordination.

- There is ongoing support for the Lalsh Cultural and Social Center, coupled with initiatives to refurbish the Lalsh Shrine and Dome in Sheikhan. Infrastructure enhancements include the construction of a dual-access road to the Lalsh Shrine, the establishment of a water reservoir, and the revival of an ancient olive oil factory to facilitate Yazidi ceremonies.
- A comprehensive plan encompasses (13) projects aimed at the restoration of revered Yazidi sites in Derabun, Sheikhan, Sheikha, Khankin, and Ba'adre. Through collaborative efforts with benefactors, four sacred sites in the Faida district have been renovated. Moreover, a prominent Yazidi figure has been appointed as district administrator in Duhok province.
- The Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) has extended support to (321) religious scholars serving as preachers and custodians of sacred sites. This assistance underscores the commitment to preserve and uphold the sanctity of religious locations.
- A conference titled "Minority in Majority Mentality: Yazidis as an Example" was convened in Erbil on 12/12/2022 by the Ministry's General Directorate of Yazidis. This forum provided Yazidi representatives with a platform to articulate their religious beliefs openly. Through comprehensive discussions, various dimensions and perspectives concerning their faith within the broader society were addressed, culminating in actionable recommendations for future endeavors.

In addressing the matter concerning children of ISIS:

When considering a comprehensive resolution to the religious status of offspring born to an ISIS father and a Yazidi mother, it is imperative for the Iraqi federal government to assume responsibility. Facilitating the official registration of these children in accordance with the religious preferences of their parents is paramount. Given that they are presently registered under the Islamic faith, a diplomatic approach would entail ensuring alignment with the parental religious affiliations.

Collaboration with international organizations

- Orchestrated a seminar on the eradication of prejudice in partnership with CASIDI Foundation International.
- Engaged the Ministry delegation in the International Conference on Religious Freedom in Prague, Czech Republic, with the objective of fostering a culture of inclusivity and respect.
- Participated in the ceremony for the Sheikh Zayed Award in the UAE, representing our Ministry delegation.
- Engaged our Ministry delegation in the International Conference on Religious Freedom in Washington, USA, to contribute to the global dialogue on this crucial issue.

Regarding the protocol concerning human organ donation and transplantation:

In pursuit of expediting the integration of international guidelines pertaining to human organ donation and transplantation within the ambit of the Kurdistan Regional Government's Human Rights Plan (2021-2025), the Office of the Coordinator for International Advocacy has proposed a series of actions aimed at eradicating human organ trafficking. These initiatives entail enlisting the collaboration of the Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs to facilitate the enforcement of the Human Organ Donation and Transplantation Law in Kurdistan No. (1) of 2018, bolstering safeguards for victims of illicit human organ donation activities, and fostering both individual and collective awareness regarding associated hazards.

It is imperative to underscore the religious aspect, which holds significant sway in the enforcement of the legislation. Thus, it is incumbent upon higher authorities to accord their consent and endorsement, particularly concerning the receipt of partial or full body organs from deceased individuals. In pursuit of this endeavor, the Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs, through correspondence referenced as Letter No. (5244/on 22/11/2023), has sought elucidation from the High Council of Fatwa of the Kurdistan Region concerning the Islamic jurisprudence pertaining to the donation and transplantation of human body organs, thereby seeking clarity on the permissibility of such acts under Sharia law.

The Supreme Council of Fatwa of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq has issued a fatwa based on legitimate evidence

This matter is a topic of considerable divergence among contemporary scholars, eliciting a spectrum of viewpoints. While some have rendered it impermissible, a majority have deemed it permissible under voluntary circumstances, excluding any involvement in commercial transactions. The Supreme Council sanctions it under the following stipulations:

1. The volunteer must be of legal age, possessing sound judgment, deemed fit for decision-making, and acting of their own volition, devoid of coercion or deceit.
2. It is imperative to uphold human dignity, refraining from any form of denigration or harm towards volunteers.
3. Donations should be made out of necessity and within prescribed limits, preferably from a close familial connection to the recipient.
4. The organ or tissue donated by the volunteer must not pose any risk to their own life, nor induce disability, illness, or compromise their well-being. It is impermissible for the donor to shirk their responsibilities, and the transfer should not abet any unlawful activities or benefit individuals whose blood relations are prohibited.
5. The life of the recipient—namely the patient—must be in imminent peril, with all conventional avenues of treatment exhausted, leaving organ transplantation as the sole recourse to preserve their life. Such decisions necessitate the evaluation of a specialized healthcare committee.
6. The intent of the physician involved in the transplantation process should not be confined to personal experimentation, training endeavors, or financial gain.

Conditions of transmission from the dead, newly dead, to living recipients:

1. The donor must be unequivocally deceased, with organ or tissue extraction occurring postmortem, and intended for transplantation into a living recipient, ensuring a complete cessation of vital functions rather than merely meeting medical criteria for death.
2. A reputable specialist must duly validate the recipient's suitability for receiving the organ or tissue, with transplantation being the sole viable medical recourse in the given circumstance.
3. The process of transportation and transplantation must strictly adhere to ethical standards, prohibiting any form of commercialization or monetary transaction involving the deceased donor's body or its components.
4. Prior to demise, or through legally binding documentation such as a will, the donor must express consent for organ donation freely and without coercion, devoid of any spiritual or material inducements.

Essential steps for the execution of suggestions concerning endowments and religious affairs.

Following a sequence of workshops and collaborative sessions, the Office of the Coordinator for International Advocacy has meticulously devised actionable strategies. These directives have been duly communicated by the Office of the Prime Minister to pertinent stakeholders, notably including the Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs.

Committed to eradicating instances of domestic violence

- Engage and synchronize efforts with religious leaders to champion the cause of addressing domestic violence as it significantly influences societal dynamics.
- Enhance the understanding of clergy members regarding gender equality and the deterrence of diverse manifestations of domestic violence by offering counsel and facilitating workshops and educational sessions.
- Formulate fundamental messages in collaboration with religious authorities concerning the prevention of domestic violence and the utilization of religious scriptures, subsequently disseminating them among stakeholders and the wider populace.

Committed to the cause of human organ donation and transplantation

- Mindful of the religious aspect, which holds significant sway in the enactment of legislation, it is imperative for governing bodies to concur and authorize such actions, particularly with regard to the reception of anatomical contributions from deceased individuals.

Regarding drugs and psychotropic substances:

It is proposed to establish specialized programs aimed at enlightening religious educators on the perils associated with substance abuse and its profound societal repercussions. This initiative seeks to enhance awareness concerning the adverse effects of drugs, fostering a more informed discourse within communities.

Dedicated to preventing discrimination and hate speech:

- Facilitate the reorientation of religious dialogue toward fostering societal harmony and safeguarding against disruptions to security and familial integrity, thereby preserving societal cohesion.
- Enhance endeavors aimed at disseminating moderate discourse and eliminating discriminatory practices within religious institutions such as mosques, churches, and temples, recognizing their pivotal role in enhancing individual consciousness and counteracting prejudice.

In alignment with international directives advocating against discrimination and hate speech, the Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs has initiated the following measures:

Firstly, the establishment of the Institute of Preachers in 2021, facilitates the scholarly discourse among preachers to address sensitive topics in a scientific manner while promoting societal awareness.

Secondly, the production of a 30-episode program scheduled for broadcast throughout the month of Ramadan, featuring content focused on consciousness-raising and local issue awareness.

Ministry of Electricity

Out of (1) recommendation submitted to the Ministry of Electricity in 2022, (1) recommendation had been implemented and (1) recommendation had not been implemented. Compared to 2023, the number of implemented recommendations is (1) and the number of recommendations that have not been implemented has increased to (1). In this regard the implementation rate becomes (75%)

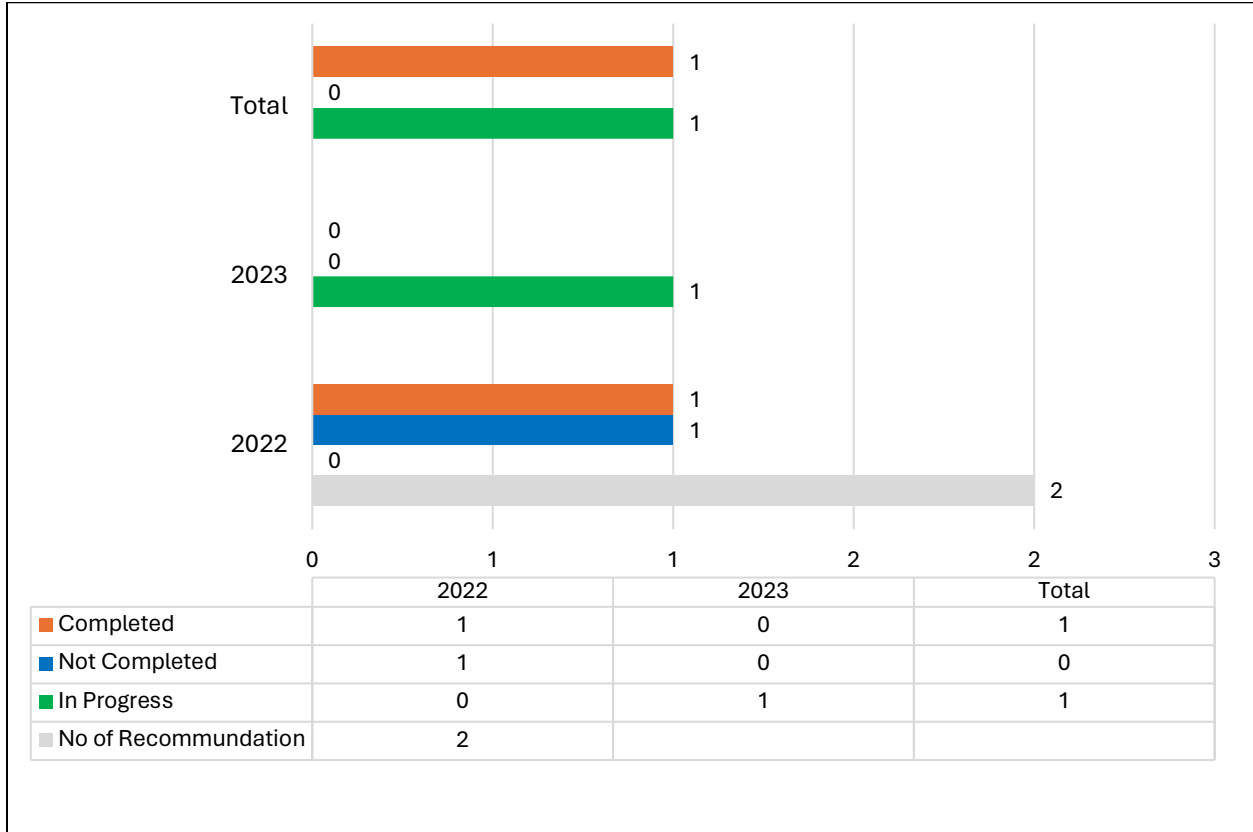


Figure 59: Implementation of Recommendations Related to the Ministry of Justice – Prosecution

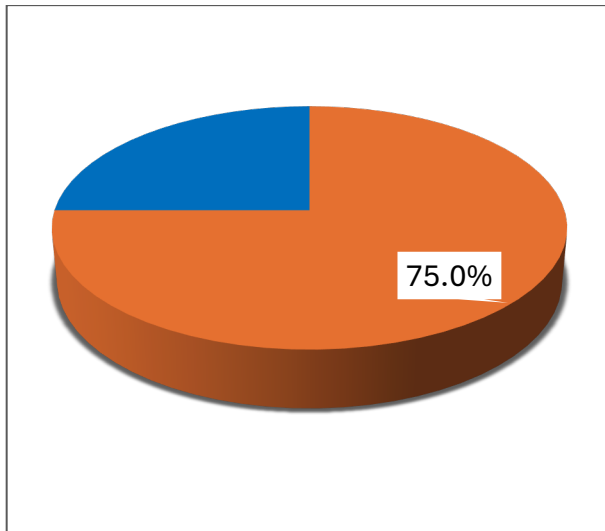


Figure-60 Rates of recommendation execution for 2022-2023

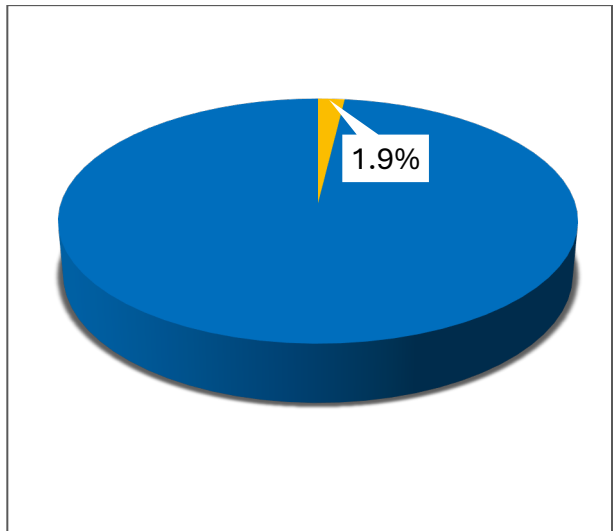


Figure-61 Effort rate of the ministry to completed the recommendations

Implemented Recommendations

1. Safeguard the welfare of refugees and internally displaced persons by ensuring their access to fundamental necessities, encompassing electricity, water, healthcare, essential sustenance, and ancillary amenities, in collaboration with the United Nations and pertinent organizations engaged in refugee advocacy and humanitarian initiatives.

Recommendations Under Consideration for Implementation:

1. Foster collaboration with international and regional entities proficient in addressing the challenges of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) promptly, while urging civil society stakeholders to extend financial and technical support for the reconstruction of areas liberated from armed extremist factions. This endeavor aims to facilitate the voluntary repatriation of IDPs to their native locales.

Below are the measures, laws, guidelines, procedures, and practical steps taken in implementing the international recommendations:

Electricity production between 2022 and 2023

Electricity supply entails considerable time and effort, involving the establishment of intricate electricity networks that necessitate substantial financial investment. Notably, there was a discernible uptick in production between 2022 and 2023, resulting in a noteworthy 183 MW increase in average production by 2023.

The generated capacity during the months of 2022 amounted to 3304 MW, allocated across various provinces and autonomous administrations. Notably, an average of 622 MW was directed to the Iraqi National Grid, serving Kirkuk and Mosul, representing 19% of the region's total production.

In 2023, the distributed generated capacity reached 3487 MW, with allocations across provinces and autonomous administrations. Significantly, an average of 782 MW was channeled into the Iraqi National Grid for Kirkuk and Mosul, constituting 22% of the region's total production.

Electricity Generation Infrastructure and Actual Capacity in the Kurdistan Region for 2023

The pinnacle of production capacity in the Kurdistan Region, in terms of infrastructure, is approximately 7000 MW, theoretically capable of providing uninterrupted electricity for 24 hours. However, the realization of this objective has been hindered by challenges such as fuel scarcity and budgetary constraints impeding the execution of planned projects.

In the year 2023, the Erbil Combined Cycle Station emerged as the primary contributor to electricity generation, followed by the Bazian and Khurmala stations. Notably, some of these facilities possess the potential to vastly exceed the output of current gas plants, exemplified by the Duhok gas plant. Regrettably, due to fuel shortages and the absence of gas pipelines, their operational capacity remains underutilized.

Several facilities hold promise for expansion, exemplified by the Khurmala plant, which presently operates within a combined cycle. An additional steam cycle, augmenting its capacity by 500 MW, is slated for implementation by 2025. A similar enhancement is planned for the Bazian gas station, adding 250 MW, with an anticipated operational commencement in March of this year (2024). Notably, these expansions leverage the existing fuel source, thus minimizing environmental impact without necessitating additional resources.

In terms of electricity generation distribution, Erbil and Sulaimani are poised to exhibit the highest outputs in 2023. Conversely, Duhok registered the lowest figures. Despite Sulaimani's secondary position in electricity provision, the diversification of energy sources within the city stands as a pivotal factor contributing to production stability and, concurrently, mitigating losses.

Continuing the Ministry of Electricity's commitment to environmental stewardship and the promotion of clean energy, multiple agreements have been forged with private sector entities for the establishment of solar power plants. The symbolic commencement of a 25 MW power plant underscores the region's dedication to sustainable energy initiatives.

Average Electricity Exchange Between Regions of Kurdistan Region in 2023

- The primary objective behind inter-regional electricity capacity exchange is to address the existing imbalance between generation capacity and the region's demand for electricity.
- In 2023, approximately 22% of the Kurdistan Region's electricity capacity is slated for export to Kirkuk and Mosul.
- Duhok is expected to receive 49% of its electricity supply from external sources, predominantly from Erbil, in 2023.
- The exportation of electricity to external entities, necessitated by fuel shortages and financial constraints, serves as a means of revenue generation for the Kurdistan Regional Government.

Factors Pertaining to Mobile Communication and Internet Access

A primary avenue for disseminating information regarding the electricity transmission system involves the utilization of (mobile numbers). These channels facilitate seamless communication between the central control hub of the region and various entities such as generation stations, substations, city control centers, and pertinent stakeholders involved in operational and maintenance activities.

Technical issues with the system:

Regular and ongoing inquiries are undertaken to detect issues within the information transmission framework and promptly address them. Discrepancies in this system have the potential to precipitate significant challenges in the oversight and governance of the electricity infrastructure.

- Outage of units in manufacturing plants (Unit Outages).
- Under Vibration and Over Vibration Protection System (Under and Over Frequency Protection System).

The Under Frequency safeguard within the Kurdistan Regional Electricity Network is structured across three tiers:

Table 43 Power grid systems

Stage 1	49.4 Hz
Stage 2	49.0 Hz
Stage 3	48.7 Hz

Following the implementation of this system, instances of systemic challenges and significant disruptions in power generation and distribution, such as widespread blackouts, have markedly decreased from previous frequencies. Rigorous oversight is maintained over this system by a dedicated committee within the Ministry and the Regional Electricity Control Center, facilitating timely adjustments to ensure alignment with operational exigencies.

Electricity system infrastructure in the Kurdistan Region

The electrical infrastructure within the Kurdistan Region maintains a commendable status quo despite prevailing financial constraints and operational challenges. With regards to production infrastructure, its capacity stands at approximately 7000 MW. The provision of electricity is ensured 24 hours a day, with a portion of this capacity held in reserve.

Regarding the transmission network, it encompasses two high-voltage substations (400 KV), numerous substations (132 KV), mobile units (132KV), as well as substations (33 KV), and an extensive network of transmission lines spanning thousands of kilometers at 132 KV and 33 KV levels.

Presently, only a fraction of the existing generation infrastructure, roughly 3500-4000 MW, is operational due to fuel shortages for gas production plants. However, plans are underway to extend the pipeline to the Duhok gas station by mid-2024, thereby augmenting natural gas production from the Kormor field by 250 million cubic feet per day (250 MMSCFD). This expansion is poised to further bolster electricity generation capacity by an additional 700 megawatts.

Concurrently, the initial phase of the smart meter initiative has reached completion, with plans underway for its subsequent phase. This project aims to efficiently manage demand, curb violations, ensure precise electricity readings, and introduce various technical enhancements aimed at rectifying issues within the distribution network.

Within the realm of energy management, efforts dedicated to enhancing production capacity significantly outweigh those focused on-demand control. Notably, the Ministry of Electricity has embarked on the prudent implementation of the smart meter project. Furthermore, endeavors have been made to engage with the Ministry of Electricity for the issuance of requisite guidelines and permits facilitating the utilization of renewable energy sources for electricity generation. Delays and setbacks in project implementation extend beyond the purview of the Ministry of Electricity.

Despite budgetary constraints, noteworthy strides have been made in the establishment and reinforcement of transmission stations and lines. However, the electricity service level has yet to align with the aspirations of the Ministry and its collaborators. Government entities, media outlets, academic institutions, and civil society organizations are encouraged to collaborate with the Ministry of Electricity to realize the goal of 24-hour electricity provision in a cost-effective manner while prioritizing environmental preservation.

Coordination with international stakeholders in 2023:

- The Ministry of Electricity and the Ministry of Natural Resources, in collaboration with Crescent Oil Company and Dana Gas, inaugurated a power distribution station in the Qadir Karam district, with an investment totaling one million dollars.
- Engaging in discussions with the German enterprise PSE regarding the execution of electricity investment initiatives within the Kurdistan Region, particularly focusing on electricity generation, transmission, and distribution, notably emphasizing the integration of renewable energy sources.
- Holding consultations with the Japanese Consul regarding the electricity sector in the region, with a specific emphasis on electricity generation from sustainable sources, wherein Mitsubishi and Toshiba companies are investing in cutting-edge technologies to advance clean energy projects within the sector.
- Facilitating discussions with the Japanese Consul on Japanese financial assistance to Iraq, underlining the pivotal role of JICA in International Cooperation. It underscored the significance of ensuring equitable allocation of resources to the Kurdistan Region within these financial aid endeavors.
- The Ministry of Electricity has maintained ongoing collaboration and coordination with various international organizations and agencies that have expressed interest in partnering with the Ministry. These collaborations are tailored to the specific expertise of each organization or agency involved, including but not limited to JICA, KOICA, UNDP, USAID, and GRD.

Board of Environmental Protection and Improvement

Out of the (5) recommendations submitted to the Environmental Protection and Rehabilitation Board in 2022, (4) recommendations have been implemented and (1) recommendation had not been implemented. Compared to 2023, the implemented recommendations remained unchanged at (4) recommendations and the un-implemented recommendations (1). In this regard the implementation rate becomes (80%)

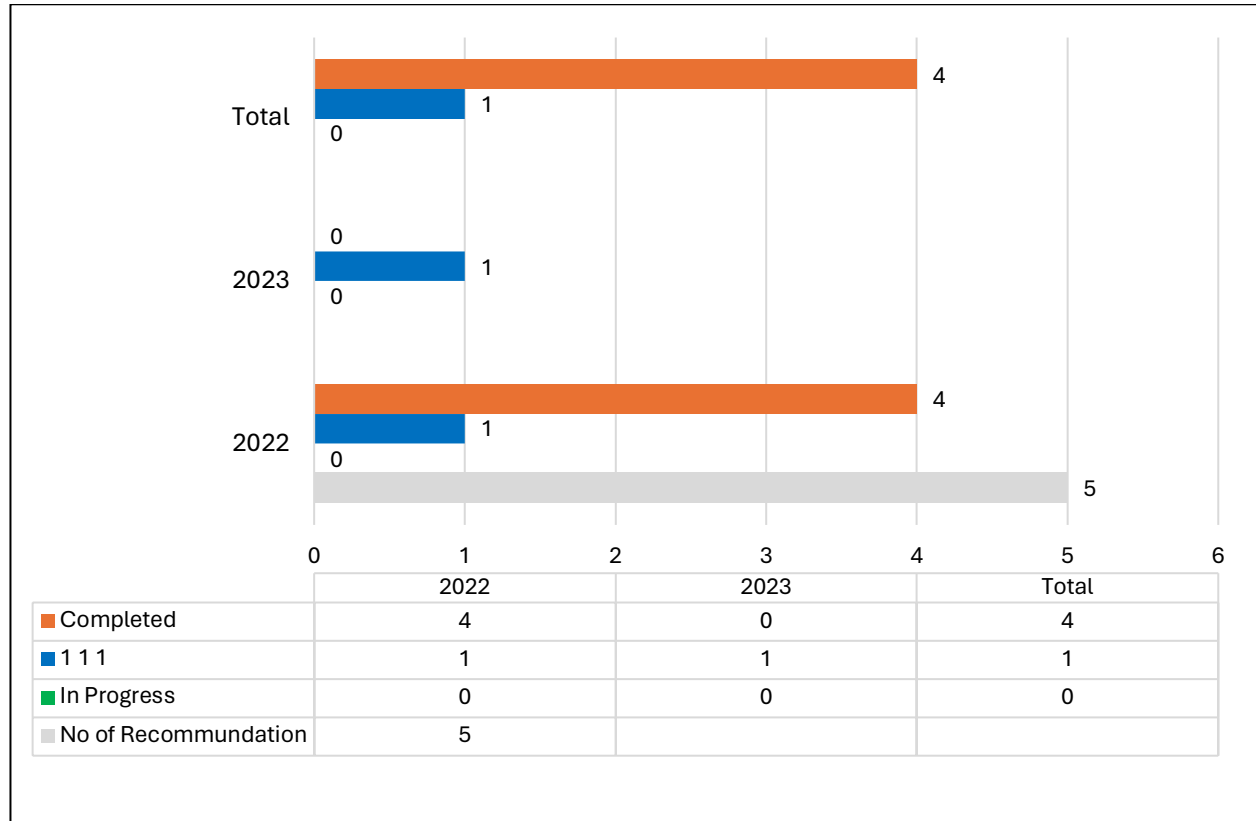


Figure 62: Implementation of Recommendations Related to the Board of Environmental Protection and Improvement

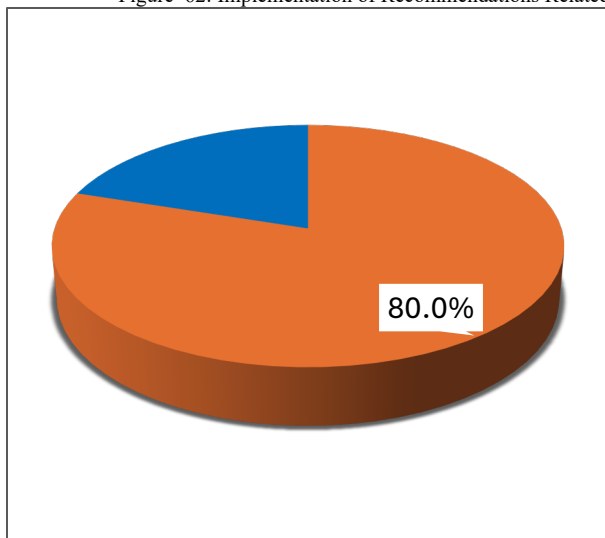


Figure-63 Rates of recommendation execution for 2022-2023

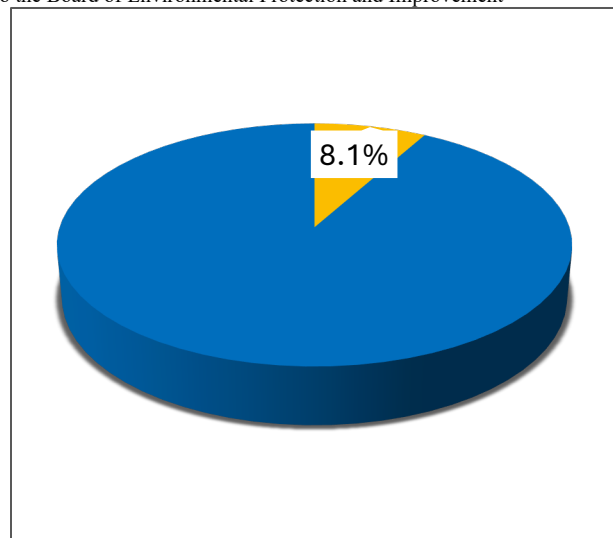


Figure-64 Effort rate of the ministry to completed the recommendations

Implemented Recommendations

1. Persist in executing environmental preservation initiatives within the framework of its sustainable development strategy.
2. Engage in the revision of the Legislation Pertaining to Environmental Preservation and Enhancement in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, as outlined in Law No. (8) of 2008.
3. Pioneering the establishment of a dedicated tribunal focused on environmental conservation.
4. Endeavoring to enshrine the entitlement to a hygienic living environment as an inherent constitutional prerogative in accordance with Article (33) of the Iraqi Constitution.

Unmet Recommendations

1. Engaging in the revision of the statute governing the operations of the Environmental Protection and Rehabilitation Board in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq as outlined in Law No. (3) of 2010.

Below are the measures, laws, guidelines, procedures, and practical steps taken in implementing the international recommendations:

Legal Framework for Environmental Conservation

- The legal apparatus for safeguarding the environment within the Kurdistan Region is anchored in the Forest Preservation Strategy Law. As stipulated in section (1) of Article (56) of the revised Law No. (1) of 1992, the Kurdistan Parliament, convened during its regular session No. (8) on 10/10/2012, enacted Law No. (10) of 2012, which promulgated the Forestry Law for the Kurdistan Region.
- In the sphere of enhancing the Environmental Protection and Enhancement Law in the Kurdistan Region No. (8) of 2008, the requisite procedures for its amendment have been diligently pursued, currently under review by the specialized committee of the Kurdistan Parliament. Simultaneously, the Environmental Protection and Restoration Board has diligently fulfilled all procedural prerequisites.

Issue requisite directives and resolutions aimed at safeguarding the environment.

The Environment Board has promulgated the ensuing directives for the period spanning 2022 to 2024:

- Directive No. 1 of 2022, outlining protocols for the implementation of environmental monitoring in project endeavors.
- Directive No. 2 of 2022, delineating regulations pertinent to the husbandry of indigenous fauna and avifauna.
- Directive No. 4 of 2022, addressing measures for the preservation of the ozone layer.
- Directive No. 5 of 2022, governing the management of radioactive sources.
- Directive No. 6 of 2022, focusing on safeguarding against non-ionizing radiation.

- Directive No. 1 of 2023, mandating regulations concerning hunting activities.
- Directive No. 2 of 2023, providing guidelines for the investigation and prosecution of environmental transgressions.
- Regulation limiting the discharge of treated sewage water and promoting its reutilization.
- Establishment of standardized laboratory testing fees under the purview of the Environmental Protection and Rehabilitation Board.
- On February 14th, 2023, the Kurdistan Regional Government enacted a decree prohibiting the importation of vehicles lacking exhaust filters.
- Directive No. 1 of 2024, outlining criteria for project classification and environmental approval.
- Guideline No. 2 of 2024, elaborating on the treatment and reuse of sewage water.

Environmental Associations Board and Environmental Awareness

- Across the provinces and autonomous administrations in the Kurdistan Region, there exist a total of (8) boards dedicated to environmental organizations, comprising approximately 221 such entities.
- Comprehensive instructional materials have been crafted to serve as environmental guides within educational institutions. Specifically, science educators are designated as environmental guides within their respective schools. To facilitate this role, a tailored handbook has been developed by the Environmental Associations Board, serving as a foundational resource for educators.

Strategic Planning for Environmental Preservation

In the year 2021, revisions were made to air quality protocols; however, substantive measures aimed at safeguarding air purity from pollution remain lacking. Recognizing this imperative, the Environmental Protection and Rehabilitation Board meticulously crafted a strategic blueprint spanning the years 2022 to 2030, with a pronounced emphasis on forest conservation. Furthermore, the board diligently forwarded numerous proposals and initiatives to pertinent implementing bodies with the aim of addressing these pressing concerns.

Relationship between the Mining Authority and Forest and Environmental Preservation

As outlined in the Strategic Forest Conservation Act, the synergy between the Mining Authority and the Forest and Environmental Preservation Agency is characterized by:

- Collaborative endeavors aimed at demining forested regions, recognizing the inherent danger posed by residual mines to civilian safety and the susceptibility of such areas to forest fires.
- Synchronized efforts with pertinent entities such as Forestry, Environmental Protection, and Forest Law Enforcement agencies, ensuring that demining operations are conducted with utmost care to mitigate adverse impacts on forest ecosystems, particularly during fire incidents necessitating forest cover removal.

Facilitate the coordination of the board's activities and explore employment avenues for graduates from the Department of Environment.

In the context of identifying employment prospects and engaging Department of Environment graduates in private sector ventures, subsequent to securing the endorsement of the Council of Ministers and in adherence to the directive (1) of 2022, oversight personnel have been designated for said ventures. In the year 2022, a cumulative total of (66) environmental oversight personnel commenced their duties. This number escalated to (217) in 2023, with placements across various provinces, as delineated below:

In 2022, (66) graduates secured employment placements as follows:

- Erbil: (104) placements
- Sulaimani: (14) placements
- Duhok: (18) placements
- Halabja: (6) placements
- Garmian: (5) placements
- Raparin: (4) placements

Statistics of the Environmental Protection and Rehabilitation Board for

First: Approval of (2851) projects for the sectors (industry, food industry, services, housing, commerce, agriculture, health, as well as radiation licenses) as follows:

1. Erbil (927) projects.
2. Sulaimani (1006) Projects.
3. Duhok (441) projects.
4. Halabja (21) projects.
5. Garmian (217) projects.
6. Raperin (239) projects.

Not giving approval to (29) projects, which do not comply with the laws and guidelines related to the environment, as follows:

- Erbil (0) projects.
- Sulaimani (16) projects.
- Duhok (5) projects.
- Garmian (1) project.
- Raperin (7) projects.

Legal cases

The Environmental Protection Board has filed several complaints against these people and parties to punish violators of the environment and for not complying with the laws and regulations as follows:

Erbil

- Court cases and complaints (42) cases.
- Warning (45) cases.
- Punishment (34) cases.
- Promissory notes (673) cases.

Sulaimani

- Court cases (182) cases.
- Punishment and options (6) cases.
- Promissory notes (1042) cases.
- Warning (128).

Duhok

- Court cases and complaints (38) cases.
- Pledge (320) cases.
- Punishment and selection (10) cases.

Garmian

- Court cases (0) cases.
- Number of complaints (6) cases.

Halabja

- Court cases and complaints (45) cases.
- Promissory notes (44) cases.
- Punishment and suspension (0) cases.
- Violations (15) cases.

Raperin

- Court cases and complaints (1) case.
- Promissory notes (73) cases.

Monitoring and follow-up of environmental committees

To monitor and follow up on the projects that have received environmental approval, the committees will visit these projects to monitor their implementation of environmental conditions and guidelines.

The total number of projects inspected and monitored during this period was (5.124) projects as follows:

- Erbil (787) projects.
- Sulaimani (2183) projects.
- Duhok (1675) projects.
- Halabja (301) projects.
- Garmian (107) projects.
- Raperin (71) projects.

Laboratory tests

Several types of tests are conducted in the laboratories of the city offices, including soil chemical tests, bacteriological tests, water chemical tests, and many other types of tests.

1. Erbil Environmental Laboratory

- Sample number: (1137).
- Inspection Number: (14452).

2. Sulaimani Environmental Laboratory

- Sample number (1100).
- Check number (17440).

3. Duhok Environmental Laboratory

- Number of samples (1724).
- Check number (10252).
- Total number of samples: (3961) samples.
- Total types of tests: (42144) tests.

Environmental preservation initiatives and guidance initiatives aimed at safeguarding the ecological integrity of Kurdistan.

Educational materials pertaining to environmental stewardship have been curated for educational institutions. Educators will serve as environmental mentors within their academic institutions, utilizing a specialized handbook crafted by the Environmental Board for instructional purposes.

Concurrently, the Kurdistan Regional Environmental Protection and Restoration Board has spearheaded multiple outreach campaigns to foster environmental consciousness and dispense guidance, as delineated below:

- Board Bureau/ Awareness Office (1148).
- Erbil (65).
- Duhok (172).
- Sulaimani (47).
- Halabja (28).
- Garmian (59).
- Raparin (216).
- Soran (140).
- Total (1875) activities.

Augmenting green spaces

The greening efforts concerning establishments and ventures licensed prior to the enactment of Law No. 8 of 2008 by the Kurdistan Regional Environmental Protection and Restoration Board, which lack designated green areas and are incapable of enhancing their greenery quotient, are enumerated as follows:

- Erbil (43450) m²
- Sulaimani (794463) m², (21) km.
- Duhok (112600) m²
- Halabja (1200) m²
- Garmian (16465) m²
- Raperin (167) m²
- Total (968345) m² which is (387338) acres and (21) km.

Implementation strategies for Environmental Board recommendations

Following a series of workshops and deliberative sessions, the Office of International Recommendations Coordination has formulated concrete action plans, which have been forwarded by the Office of the Prime Minister to pertinent authorities, including the Prosecutor General, for the execution of international directives.

Committed to Environmental Conservation

- Facilitation of engagement with environmental advocacy groups in collaboration with the Office of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), recognizing the presence of (221) environmental organizations with only (3) actively participating.
- Collaboration with international environmental entities to procure air quality monitoring instrumentation.
- Cooperation with the Ministry of Municipalities to ensure a minimum of 45% green space allocation within hospital premises.
- Synchronizing efforts with the Judicial Council to establish a specialized court dedicated to environmental matters.
- Aligning strategies with the Ministry of Agriculture to devise a comprehensive plan safeguarding natural forest. The Kurdistan Region boasts over two million (372) thousand dunams of natural forests, alongside (35) thousand dunams of cultivated ones.

Board of Investment

Out of the (9) recommendations submitted to the Investment Committee in 2022, (2) recommendations have been implemented, (2) recommendations have not been implemented and (5) recommendations were in the process of implementation. Compared to 2023, the implemented recommendations remained the same at (2) recommendations and there are no more unfulfilled recommendations, and the recommendations in the implementation stage reached (7). In this regard the implementation rate becomes (61.1%)

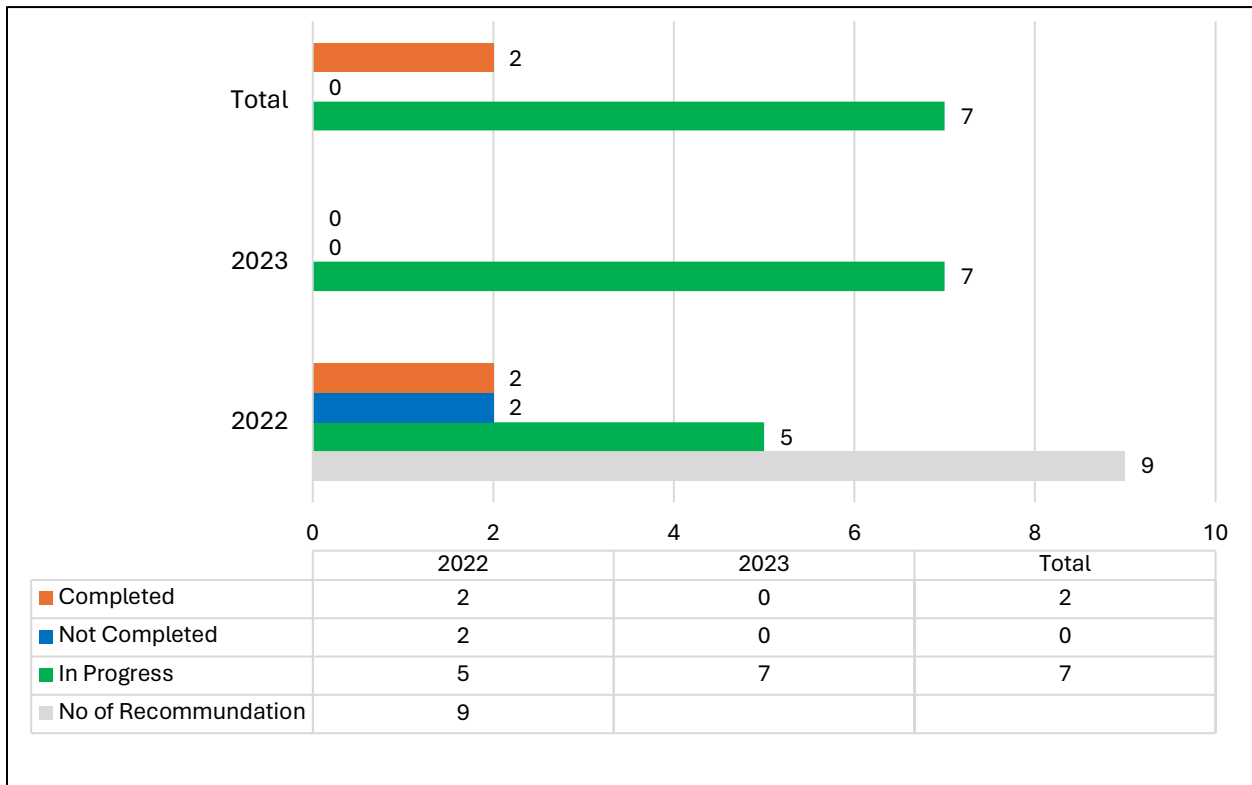


Figure 65: Implementation of Recommendations Related to the Board of Investment

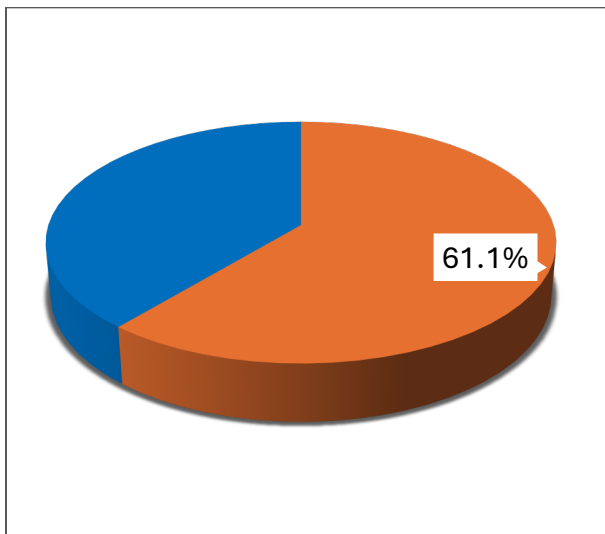


Figure-66 Rates of recommendation execution for 2022-2023

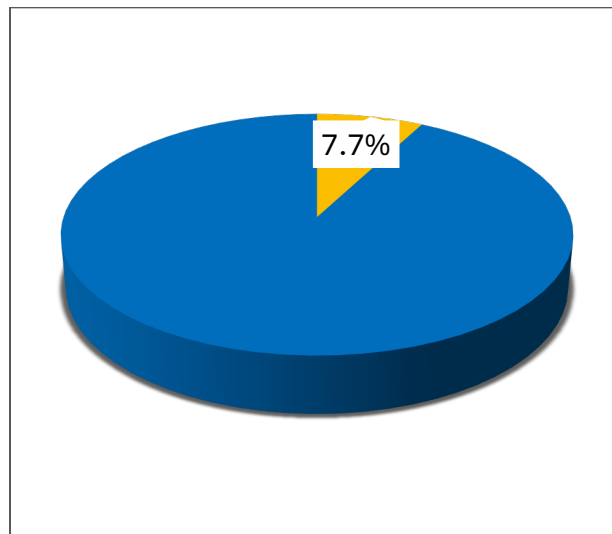


Figure-67 Effort rate of the ministry to completed the recommendations

Implemented Recommendations

1. Persist in the proficient execution of the Poverty Alleviation Strategy for 2018-2022 and the National Development Plan for 2018-2022, while allocating requisite resources to facilitate their realization. Such endeavors are imperative to enhance the quality of life for the populace and advance the pursuit of sustainable developmental objectives.
2. Sustain efforts in advocating urban planning strategies aimed at fostering comprehensive societal advancement across all demographic sectors.

Recommendations Under Consideration for Implementation:

1. Sustain the ongoing endeavor to enact reforms aimed at bolstering institutional capacity in alignment with the objectives outlined in the UN Sustainable Development Goals for 2030.
2. Embrace a developmental approach directed towards catalyzing private sector engagement and investment to advance and safeguard human rights.
3. Ensure the appropriate allocation of requisite resources to facilitate the effective execution of developmental plans and strategies geared toward poverty alleviation.
4. Persist in the advocacy and execution of policies and strategies conducive to poverty mitigation, leveraging programs designed to empower the populace and foster optimal growth and prosperity.
5. Foster further advancement in economic and social spheres, endeavoring to elevate the quality of life for all individuals.
6. Prioritize the enhancement of conditions for refugees and bolster resources allocated towards addressing their needs within social welfare initiatives.
7. Persevere poverty alleviation endeavors, with particular emphasis on rural communities.

Below are the measures, laws, guidelines, procedures, and practical steps taken in implementing the international recommendations:

Licenses for investment initiatives

Under the auspices of the ninth cabinet, which held office until the conclusion of 2023, approximately (333) investment permits have been duly granted. Each of these initiatives has commenced its operations, with a number having already entered the productive phase. Notably, there have been no instances of project cessation, save for (83) instances in the year 2023. Concurrently, a total of 1219 projects have received approval within the Kurdistan Region, poised to be officially licensed in 2024, thereby advancing the collective welfare of all inhabitants of the region.

Construction of 20,000 housing units tailored for disadvantaged individuals and tenants.

Over 200,000 residential accommodations have received official approval within the Kurdistan Region, predominantly catering to individuals of modest or moderate means. Under the auspices of the Prime Minister, an initiative has been launched to erect 20,000 residential units specifically designated for the economically disadvantaged populace across Kurdistan. This endeavor is presently underway and forms part of an ongoing commitment spanning the forthcoming years, intended to ameliorate the living conditions of impoverished citizens and tenants within the Kurdistan region.

The completion timeline is set at two years, with provision for allocation to citizens in a single, protracted disbursement catering to all three demographic segments. Additionally, the Ministry of Reconstruction is tasked with the allocation of (9) thousand apartments and (4) residential units, contingent upon financing facilitated by the Investment Board. Progress on these developments' ranges from 30% to 90%, with requisite funding being a primary consideration for their timely conclusion alongside the aforementioned 20,000 units. The overarching objective is to ensure widespread beneficiary access to these residential initiatives, inclusive of the (20) thousand units, in tandem with comprehensive ancillary services.

Projects with service deficiencies

New initiatives must adhere to established standards and encompass comprehensive service provisions. Historically, numerous educational facilities have been erected through collaborative endeavors between investors and the Ministry of Education. Instances have arisen where projects lacking requisite educational infrastructure have necessitated supplementary construction efforts. Additionally, certain entities have undertaken voluntary initiatives to independently establish educational institutions.

Presentation of investment cartography for all tourism ventures

In the fiscal year 2023, there has been a notable evolution in investment strategies, notably the segmentation of investment blueprints. Initially, the comprehensive investment strategy encompassing all tourism initiatives will be tendered for consideration within the purview of the tourism investment framework, in close collaboration with the tourism oversight body. These initiatives have encountered minimal impediments; however, expediting investor approvals within a concise timeframe has deviated from the customary bureaucratic process.

The Investment Commission is poised to spearhead the development of concise investment cartography within the agricultural domain in tandem with the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources and within the industrial sector in collaboration with the Ministry of Trade and Industry. Noteworthy strides toward the establishment of industrial zones are slated to commence in 2023, with approximately (8) such zones currently in a state of readiness.

A concerted effort is underway to augment investment levels by an estimated margin of 30% to 50%. To this end, new administrative facilities have been erected, and fresh personnel have been enlisted. A specialized entity christened the "Investor Service Unit" is slated for establishment across eight regional offices spanning the Kurdistan Region, aimed at providing tailored support to investors.

Attracting Investors to Development Initiatives

Concurrently advancing alongside other economic endeavors within the Kurdistan Region, service projects across various sectors are currently in progress. Of particular significance is the initiative to establish railway connections between cities within the region. Presently, multiple ministries within the Kurdistan Regional Government are diligently engaged in this endeavor. Endeavors are underway to finalize the project's blueprint, craft a comprehensive work plan, and navigate the procedural steps necessary for permit issuance and project implementation.

Moreover, an array of projects aimed at enhancing the quality of life for citizens within the Kurdistan Region is underway. These encompass endeavors in the banking realm, water management, sewage infrastructure, household gas provisions, as well as agricultural initiatives such as irrigation systems to support farming communities. These endeavors fall squarely within the purview of projects necessitating heightened governmental attention, with further endeavors earmarked for future expansion.

Under the auspices of the ninth cabinet of the Kurdistan Regional Government, a total of 395 project licenses have been issued across diverse sectors, catalyzing the creation of 30,000 direct and 45,000 indirect employment opportunities.

In the year 2023 alone, 145 investment licenses were granted for distinct projects spanning various sectors, contributing to the creation of 8,500 employment opportunities. Notably, investment initiatives in Halabja province remain relatively limited. Accordingly, there exists a pressing need to augment support mechanisms for enterprises undertaking investment ventures in Halabja.

The licensing of projects for investment is guided by recommendations aimed at enhancing investment dynamics, mitigating poverty, and fostering prosperity.

Between 2019 and 2023, the Investment Board has authorized a total of 405 licenses, comprising 399 domestic, 3 foreign, and 3 joint investments, strategically allocated across the following sectors.

Table 44 Number of investment projects

Number of investment projects in 2019 - 2023	
2019	15
2020	71
2021	70
2022	94
2023	155
Total projects	405

Sectors:

- In the businesses sector (94) projects.
- In the banking and financial services sector (2) projects.
- In the health sector (26) projects.
- In the industrial sector (103) projects have been licensed.
- In the service sector (3) projects have been licensed.
- In the tourism sector (55) projects have been licensed.
- In the teaching sector (38) projects have been licensed.
- In the agriculture sector (17) projects have been licensed.
- In the housing sector (57) projects have been licensed.
- In the art sector (2) projects have been licensed.
- In the sports sector (8) projects have been licensed.

Procedures requisite for executing the propositions of the Investment Board

Following a sequence of workshops and roundtable discussions, the Office of the Coordinator for International Advocacy delineated precise measures and was instructed by the Office of the Prime Minister to convey these directives to pertinent stakeholders, including the Investment Board, for the purpose of executing the international recommendations.

Committed to environmental preservation.

- Conducting additional scrutiny of residential endeavors for potential deviations from environmental protocols, emphasizing the cultivation of vegetation as mandated.
- Enhancing green spaces within residential developments, alongside initiatives targeting places of worship such as mosques and temples.
- Advocating for a resurgence in the utilization of natural stone in construction endeavors, addressing concerns regarding the suboptimal quality of contemporary materials.

Concerning the rights of individuals with disabilities

- Facilitating housing arrangements through extended payment plans to accommodate the needs of individuals requiring long-term support.

Mine Action Agency

Out of the (4) recommendations submitted to the Mine Action Agency in 2022, (3) recommendations have been implemented and (1) recommendation was in the process of implementation. Compared to 2023, the implemented recommendations have increased to (4) recommendations, where it has implemented all the recommendations and should continue to work on the implemented recommendations. In this regard the implementation rate becomes (100%)

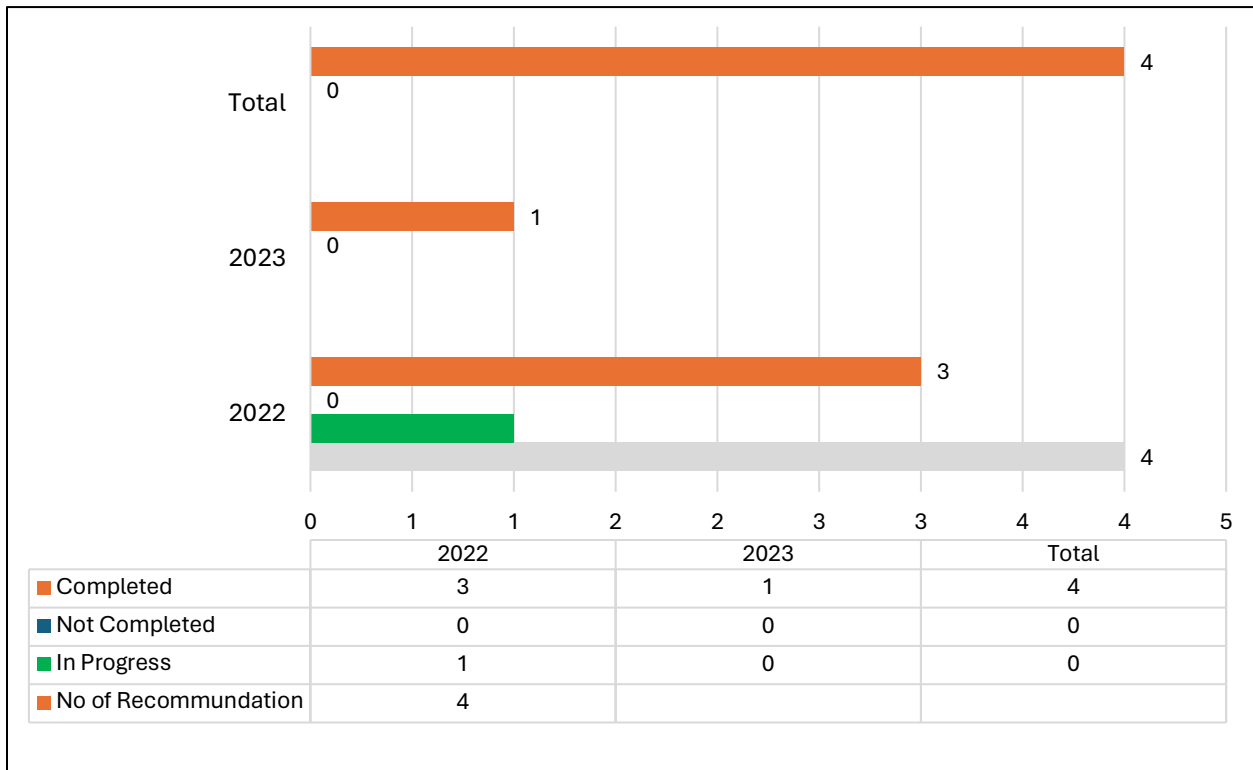


Figure 68: Implementation of Recommendations Related to the Ministry of Justice – Prosecution

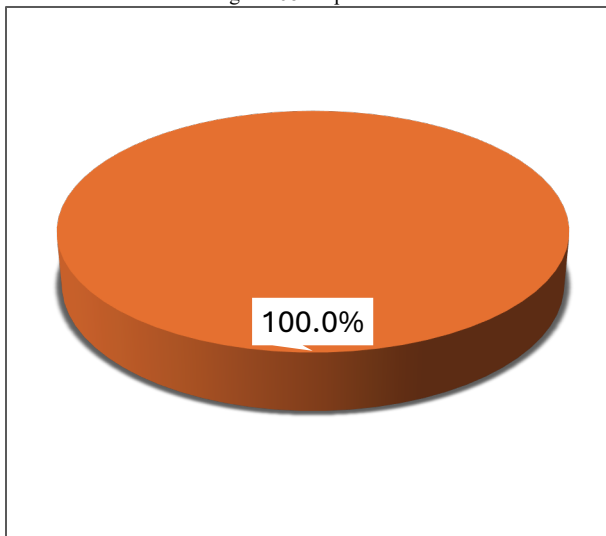


Figure-69 Rates of recommendation execution for 2022-2023

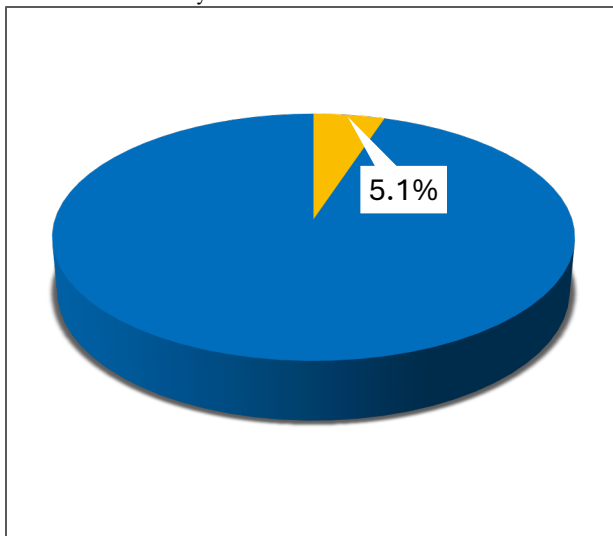


Figure-70 Effort rate of the ministry to completed the recommendations

Implemented Recommendations

1. Sustain collaboration with national authorities specializing in mine-related affairs throughout comprehensive mine-related processes to foster a secure environment for both host and returnee communities.
2. Undertake concerted endeavors to eliminate all vestiges of conflict and enhance public awareness regarding their diverse manifestations, by implementing safeguarding measures and ensuring requisite healthcare provisions for children affected by injury or illness.
3. Formulate an expeditious blueprint for the clearance of these mines and the revitalization of impacted regions, advocating for Member State engagement in fostering partnerships with pertinent international and regional entities in this domain.
4. The repercussions of armed conflict and other acts of violence targeting civilian populations leading to displacement within the Member State disproportionately affect individuals with disabilities, accentuating heightened injury rates among this demographic owing to conflict dynamics and deficient access to medical and essential services, notably within the Kurdistan Region.

Below are the measures, laws, guidelines, procedures, and practical steps taken in implementing the international recommendations:

Clearance of Ministry-Owned Land from Mines

The Mine Agency has initiated 29 projects across various regions within the Kurdistan Region aimed at the demining and subsequent restoration of affected lands, fostering conditions conducive to prosperity. Throughout 2022, the collaborative efforts of this agency alongside pertinent organizations will facilitate the clearance of over (2,316,756) square meters of land contaminated by mines. Subsequently, in 2023, a further (1,005,015) square meters of land are slated for clearance.

Demined Territories in 2023 across Kurdistan Region Provinces:

Table 45 Cleared land statistics

Cleared land in 2023	The total
Total land cleared in m2 by the Mine Agency	1,005,015
Total land cleared in m2 by organizations	858,057
Total land cleared in m2 by private sector companies	0
The total	859,062

Table 46 Ammunition fragment naming statistics

Explosives in 2023	The Total
Total destruction of explosive fragments by the Mine Agency	548,726
Total destruction of explosive parts by organizations	650
The total	549,376

Issuance of licenses to mining companies and organizations

The Mine Agency regularly issues licenses to mine-related companies and organizations in the Kurdistan Region, as shown in the following table:

Table47 Licensing statistics

Licensing number in 2023	The Total
License renewal for the company	8
Granting of licenses to the company	0
License renewal for the organization	5
Granting licenses to the organization	1
The total	14

Mine and explosives awareness initiatives

In the year 2022, dedicated teams engaged in numerous awareness initiatives across urban centers, rural locales, and refugee settlements. Throughout this period, a total of 195,869 informational materials including posters, guide booklets, and various awareness aids were disseminated. Looking ahead to 2023, the focus remains steadfast on dissemination, with plans to distribute 15,504 posters, leaflets, and contact cards, particularly targeting communities residing in areas susceptible to mine hazards. Additionally, courses on explosives awareness and safety monitoring continue to be prioritized.

Table 48: Quantity of Training Courses

Conducting training courses in 2023	The Total	Number of participants
Number of training courses conducted by the mine agency	3	35
Number of training courses conducted by organizations	12	139
The total	15	174

Table49 Number of beneficiaries from awareness

Regional Explosives Awareness in 2023	The Total
Number of villages/camps visited	353
Number of meetings with beneficiaries	541
Number of beneficiaries (male) over (18) years	7,698
Number of beneficiaries (female) over (18) years	1,893
Number of beneficiaries (young - male) from (13 - 17) years	1,642
Number of beneficiaries (young - female) from (13 - 17) years	1,759
Number of beneficiaries (children - males) from (6 - 12) years	3,690
Number of beneficiaries (children - females) from (6 - 12) years	3,985
The Total	20,667

Casualties and Incidents Involving Mines and Explosives: Statistics from 2022 to 2023

In 2022, a total of (36) individuals tragically lost their lives in the process of mine clearance, acknowledged as valiant contributors to the battlefield. Additionally, there are (78) Peshmerga personnel who sustained disabilities as a result, facing financial hardships due to reductions in their stipends. Moving to 2023, there were (23) reported fatalities stemming from landmine accidents across various provinces, including Erbil, Sulaimani, Duhok, Halabja, and Garmian.

Table 50 Number of mine and explosive victims

Number of mine and explosive victims in 2023	The Total
Number of injured	13
Number of fatalities	10
The Total	23

Compensation and service

Assistance to Mine Victims by Erbil, Sulaimani, Duhok, and ICRC Artificial Limbs and Training Centers:

Table 51 Mine and Explosives Victim Assistance Number

Assistance to Mine Victims in 2023	The Total
Number of patients	5,396
Number of psychotherapies	0
Number of natural treatments performed	3,852
Number of Artificial limb repair	2,483
Number of wheelchairs offered	11
Number of walking assistants offered	775
Number of WC seats offered	537
Number of disabled people who have received housing repairs	5
Number of assistance workshops for the disabled	2
Income Project for Disabled Direct Beneficiaries	1
Number of disabled persons who have received vocational training	0
Number of supports (Orthosis) made	60
Number of upper steps created	75
Number of bottom steps created	370
The Total	13,567

High council of women and development

Among the (42) recommendations presented to the High Council for Women and Development in 2022, (30) recommendations have been successfully executed, while (12) recommendations remain pending. A comparison with the previous year, 2023, reveals a reduction in both the number of implemented recommendations, now standing at (30) recommendations, and those pending implementation, which have decreased to (9) recommendations. Additionally, the number of recommendations currently undergoing implementation has decreased to three. In this regard the implementation rate becomes (75%).

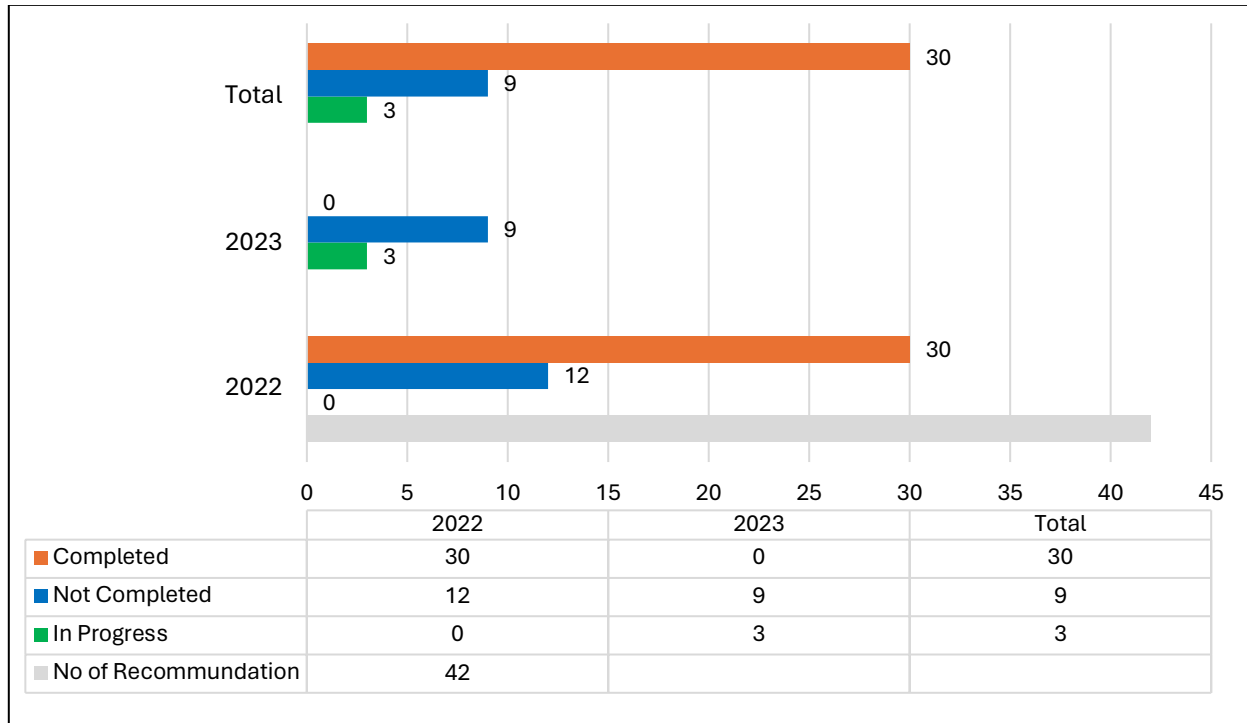


Figure 71: Implementation of Recommendations Related to the High council of women and development

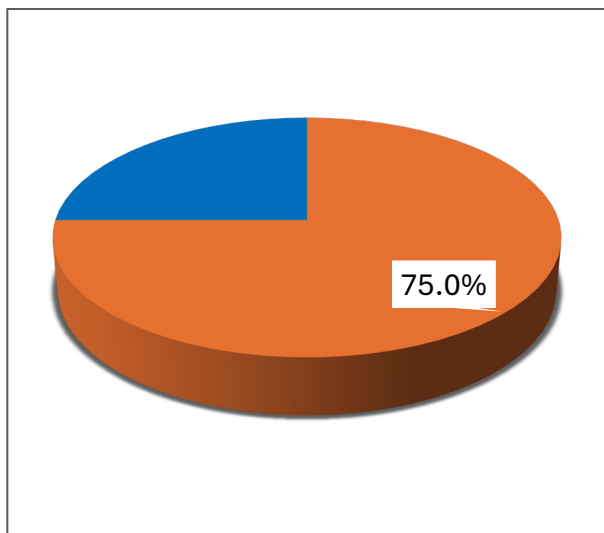


Figure-72 Rates of recommendation execution for 2022-2023

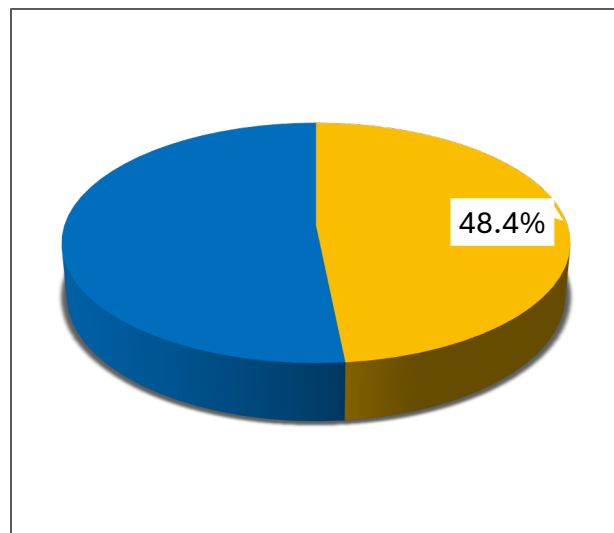


Figure-73 Effort rate of the ministry to completed the recommendations

Implemented Recommendations:

1. Iraq has ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.
2. Adoption of the Optional Protocol to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the timely consideration of amendments to Article 20/1 during the Committee meeting.
3. Withdrawal of reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women to eradicate discriminatory laws and practices, ensure parity in familial and marital affairs and eliminate legal provisions granting impunity to perpetrators of domestic violence.
4. Expedited review of the penal code and relevant legislation to align with international norms, particularly the Law on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.
5. Repeal of Articles 128, 130, and 131 pertaining to honor crimes (mitigating circumstances, honorable motive).
6. Revision and removal of all provisions in the Iraqi Penal Code permitting domestic violence.
7. Revision of Article (9) of the Personal Status Law pertaining to coerced marriage.
8. Abolition of legal provisions permitting corporal punishment, as outlined in Article 41/1 of the Penal Code, specifically addressing instances of spousal abuse or parental and educational discipline towards children, irrespective of adherence to legal or customary norms.
9. Heightened endeavors to eradicate intersecting discrimination encountered by women with disabilities from diverse ethnic, religious, or linguistic backgrounds.
10. Heightened endeavors to eliminate intersecting discrimination faced by women and girls with disabilities, accompanied by the implementation of effective measures toward this end.
11. Implementation of comprehensive measures to eradicate intersecting discrimination, particularly targeting women with disabilities residing in rural areas, displaced women with disabilities, and those from various ethnic, religious, or linguistic communities (this recommendation is specifically directed towards the Kurdistan Regional Government).
12. Integration of disability considerations into the regional action plan for the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 of 2000 on women, peace, and security.
13. Integration of gender perspectives into disability-related policies, with a focus on ensuring the comprehensive incorporation of disability concerns into legislation and policies pertaining to gender equality, such as the National Strategy for the Advancement of Iraqi Women (2014-2018), the Combating Violence against Women Act of 2013, the National Action Plan for the Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 of 2000 on Women and Peace and Security (2014-2018), and the National Strategy for Women's Development in the Kurdistan Region (2013-2).
14. Promotion of a culture of nondiscrimination through the expansion of governmental initiatives in partnership with civil society organizations.

15. Enactment of legislation addressing domestic violence, with explicit provisions disallowing the invocation of honor as a legal defense for violence against women.
16. Provision of comprehensive safeguards for women who report incidents of domestic violence.
17. Implementation of effective measures, with active involvement from organizations representing women and girls with disabilities, to integrate disability considerations into all gender-related policies and laws, including the Domestic Violence Protection Bill, while also ensuring the incorporation of gender perspectives into all disability-related policies and laws.
18. Integration of gender mainstreaming principles across national legislation, policies, plans, programs, and budgets.
19. Cultivation of a conducive environment supportive of women's empowerment and advancement across economic, social, and cultural domains.
20. Ensuring the full implementation of the national strategy for combating violence against women.
21. Guaranteeing the participation of women, children, and individuals with disabilities in the formulation of laws and initiatives addressing environmental changes and mitigating the risks of environmental disasters.
22. Development of a comprehensive strategy to prevent discrimination, stigmatization, and marginalization of women and children among internally displaced persons (IDPs) associated with ISIS, survivors, returnees, and displaced individuals, alongside providing requisite conditions for their societal reintegration.
23. Strive for gender parity in employee recruitment, ministerial appointments, and high-level political positions.
24. Facilitate the engagement of women, including those from diverse religious, ethnic, and sectarian backgrounds, in international peace initiatives, transitional justice mechanisms, and national reconciliation processes.
25. Implement a comprehensive strategy to eradicate discriminatory stereotypes and harmful practices such as child marriage and temporary unions.
26. Draw upon the principles outlined in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action to achieve substantive equality between men and women.
27. Develop a holistic policy framework for the rehabilitation of women and girls forcibly married to ISIL terrorists, survivors of enslavement, or victims of sexual and physical violence, encompassing provision of medical, psychological, and social support services, integration into society, establishment of shelters for those seeking refuge, and allocation of adequate resources to support these initiatives.
28. Enhance existing national mechanisms aimed at preventing domestic violence and safeguarding all victims.
29. Systematically collect data on all instances of sexual violence against women, categorized by age, geographical location, disability status, and relationship dynamics between victim and perpetrator.

30. Intensify endeavors to combat intersecting forms of discrimination faced by women and girls with disabilities, particularly focusing on rural populations, displaced or refugee women, immigrants, and those belonging to various ethnic, religious, or linguistic communities.

Unmet Recommendations

1. Suspension of Article (398) of the Penal Code, which pertains to the marriage of a perpetrator to their victim.
2. Permitting abortion in accordance with the law in cases involving physical harm or jeopardy to the life or health of the pregnant woman, or in instances of severe fetal deformity.
3. Enact legislation to prevent and eradicate harmful practices against women and girls, notably early marriage and female genital mutilation.
4. Amendment of Article 287 of the Principles of Criminal Procedure Law to ensure a two-year deferral of execution for pregnant or breastfeeding women following childbirth.
5. Expedite the revision process of Personal Status Law No. 188 of 1959, Civil Law No. 40 of 1951, and other national statutes to align with international norms, notably the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.
6. Revision of Article (7) of the Personal Status Law regarding marriage eligibility criteria, acknowledging that current provisions may discriminate against individuals with disabilities.
7. Enactment of legislation addressing the needs of survivors of crimes perpetrated by ISIS, ensuring conformity with international human rights standards and principles.
8. Conduct community outreach initiatives to raise awareness about the Domestic Violence Protection Bill.
9. Implementation of effective measures, with genuine involvement from organizations representing women and girls with disabilities, to incorporate disability perspectives into all gender-related policies and laws, including the Domestic Violence Protection Bill, and to integrate gender considerations across policies and laws related to disability issues.

Recommendations Under Consideration for Implementation:

1. Conduct a thorough review and amendment of legal provisions within the Penal Code and the Principles of Criminal Procedure Act, targeting elements that perpetuate discrimination against women and foster a climate conducive to gender-based violence.
2. Eliminate discriminatory legal provisions related to the minimum age of marriage for girls as stipulated in the Personal Status Law.
3. Foster women's participation in political and public spheres, including dialogue and peacebuilding processes, and ensure their access to decision-making platforms.

Below are the measures, laws, guidelines, procedures, and practical steps taken in implementing the international recommendations:

Alignment of domestic legislation with international norms:

Modifications have been made to the Iraqi Penal Code No. (111) of 1969 to ensure compliance with international standards. Notably, several provisions, including Articles (156, 157, 189, 190, 195, 198, 219, 223, 224, 225, 227, 228, 204, 41, 409, 128, 130, 131, 377), have been either suspended or amended. Specifically, Articles 128, 130, and 131 pertaining to honor killings have been suspended.

Amendments to the Iraqi Penal Code have been made to encompass penalties for rape, sexual assault, and the prosecution of perpetrators. This has been addressed through the enforcement of the Domestic Violence Law in the Kurdistan Region, which comprehensively addresses such offenses.

The repeal of Article 398 of the Iraqi Penal Code, addressing the marriage of an aggressor to their victim, remains outstanding. Nevertheless, revisions or abolitions have been enacted concerning provisions sanctioning forced marriage, permissible physical violence against women and minors, and the eradication of discrimination based on religious and ethnic affiliations.

Notably, amendments to the Principles of Justice Act, including the Personal Status Act No. 188 of 1959, to align with international conventions safeguarding the rights of women and children, have yet to be affected. While 25 articles of the Act were amended in 2008, subsequent proposals for further revisions have not been submitted to Parliament.

Efforts towards eliminating legal discrimination linked to the minimum marriage age for girls, as stipulated in the Personal Status Law, are pending implementation. Although the law permits marriage at 16 in certain cases, practical execution remains pending. Additionally, Article 7 of the Personal Status Act, mandating mental competency as a prerequisite for marriage, persists despite international standards highlighting discriminatory implications against individuals with disabilities. Amendments to rectify these disparities are yet to be realized.

Prevention of Early Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation:

In March 2021, the High Council for Women and Development launched an extensive campaign and dialogue aimed at preventing, providing services for, and ultimately ending harmful practices, including honor killings, child marriage, and female genital mutilation.

While female genital mutilation is formally recognized as a criminal offense under Law No. 8 of 2011, clandestine practices persist, necessitating widespread societal awareness of the associated dangers and stringent enforcement measures to hold perpetrators accountable.

To address the persistence of early marriage and female genital mutilation, several measures are proposed, including the enactment of dedicated legislation to combat sexual assault and the establishment of legal provisions specifically tailored to support Yazidi women survivors, in alignment with recent legislative developments such as Law No. 8 (2021) passed by the Iraqi Parliament.

Complementary efforts include initiatives such as the Domestic Violence Act and the exploration of establishing a specialized court to handle cases of violence, all aimed at eradicating these entrenched phenomena.

Postponing Capital Punishment for Pregnant Women:

The amendment of Article 287 of the Principles of Justice Law remains pending. This article stipulates a four-month window following childbirth for the execution of the death penalty. However, it's noteworthy that in the Kurdistan Region, despite court decisions, the enforcement of capital punishment for pregnant women has not been practiced.

Efforts to Rescue Yazidi Women Victims of ISIS:

There is a recommendation for the enactment of legislation specifically for Yazidi women survivors, akin to Law No. 8 of the Iraqi Parliament (2021), or the enforcement of similar existing laws. These recommendations underscore the necessity of establishing comprehensive support programs for women and children who have survived ISIS atrocities. The Women's Council is actively engaged in providing both material and spiritual assistance to these victims.

Moreover, the recommendations stress the importance of supporting survivors of sexual violence and ensuring accountability for perpetrators, including the prohibition of slavery and human trafficking. The High Council for Women and Development has integrated these concerns into the proposed amendments to the Domestic Violence Law, currently under review by parliament.

Concurrently, ongoing efforts focus on delivering psychological, medical, and social services to these women, with continuous endeavors aimed at achieving this objective.

In Iraq, the issuance of Yazidi Women Survivors Law No. 8 of 2021 and Directive No. 4 of 2021 demonstrates the commitment to facilitating the implementation of supportive measures for these women, outlining a range of rights and privileges for those rescued from ISIS.

Summary of the Action Plan for Implementing UN Security Council Resolution (1325):

In terms of participation:

- Enhance female representation within the security sector and the High Commission for Coexistence, Peace, and Social Affairs.
- Augment the involvement of women in humanitarian assistance and post-conflict reconstruction initiatives.
- Empower women to play pivotal roles in negotiations and processes related to peacebuilding.

In the realm of protection:

- Ensure that relevant authorities establish and implement effective mechanisms and protocols to safeguard women during times of conflict, promptly addressing reported cases.
- Promote greater utilization of available reporting mechanisms and channels by women affected by gender-based violence.
- Enhance the responsiveness and support provided to individuals who report incidents of gender-based violence.
- Disseminate information among women regarding the procedures and resources accessible for reporting during conflict situations.
- Foster public awareness campaigns emphasizing the critical importance of protecting women both during and after periods of conflict.

In terms of prevention:

- Enhance access for women to preventive services and programs, including those administered by governmental and official entities, as well as community-based initiatives.
- Implement legislative reforms and regulatory measures aimed at safeguarding women in conflict situations, thereby augmenting the legal framework for their protection.

Promoting a Culture of Gender Equality and Inclusion:

The High Council for Women and Development collaborates closely with the Ministry of Education to instill a culture of nondiscrimination against women and women with disabilities. Moreover, it orchestrates annual campaigns spanning 16 days commencing on March 8th, alongside hosting research endeavors and conferences focused on eradicating harmful traditions infringing upon women's rights.

Efforts extend to incorporating women, children, and individuals with disabilities into environmental initiatives, ensuring the equitable treatment of women survivors of ISIS, facilitating women's ascension to prominent political positions, fostering active political and economic engagement among community women, and advocating for the prohibition of practices such as child marriage and temporary unions. Programmatic endeavors are underway to advance gender equality comprehensively.

Creating an enabling environment for women's empowerment across various domains is deemed imperative. To this end, the Women's Council maintains ongoing collaboration with UN agencies, bolstering efforts towards gender parity and inclusivity.

Elimination of Discriminatory Legislation Regarding Minimum Marriage Age:

- Drafting a proposed amendment to the Personal Status Law, particularly clauses pertaining to marriages below the age of 18, with the intention of presenting it for legislative consideration during the upcoming parliamentary session.
- Launching a community-wide awareness campaign to underscore the adverse repercussions associated with underage marriage, encompassing aspects related to health, social well-being, and education.
- Implementing measures to prevent the marriage of girls under the age of 18 by religious authorities outside the purview of the judiciary.
- Conducting an extensive media outreach initiative, targeting schools, universities, and other educational institutions, and disseminating informational brochures and pamphlets outlining legal and health-related insights for students.

Enhancing Women's Empowerment in Rural Regions:

The table below illustrates the utilization of services aimed at rural women and the resultant beneficiaries. It delineates the number of individuals and the corresponding financial assistance, denoted in Iraqi Dinars, extended by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to bolster the socioeconomic standing of women residing in both urban and rural locales.

Table 52 Number of Rural Women Beneficiaries

office	Inner-city beneficiaries	Consent Loan Received (Downtown)	Number of out-of-town beneficiaries	For them satisfaction loans received out of town	Number of beneficiaries	for them satisfaction loans received
Erbil	146	1,185,000,000	229	2,201,500,000	375	3,386,500,000
Sulaimani	448	2884500000	134	1,034,500,000	582	3,919,000,000
Duhok	76	755800000	76	632,900,000	152	1,388,700,000
Garmian	89	857850000	0	0	89	857,850,000
Total	759	5683150000	439	3,868,900,000	1,198	9,552,050,000

Dedicated to the elimination of domestic violence:

Prioritize the establishment of an interconnected system that unifies all stakeholders engaged in combatting domestic violence, aimed at enhancing coordination and streamlining case monitoring. This entails reinforcing collaboration among law enforcement officials in police precincts, domestic violence departments, investigating magistrates, and judicial bodies to expedite the investigative and adjudicative processes concerning domestic violence cases.

Implementation of High Council for Women and Development Recommendations:

Following a series of workshops and roundtable discussions, the Office of the Coordinator for International Recommendations has devised specific action plans. These plans have been forwarded by the Office of the Prime Minister to pertinent authorities, including the High Council for Women and Development, to ensure the effective implementation of the recommendations.

Committed to Combating Domestic Violence:

- Prioritize the establishment of an integrated system that fosters collaboration among all stakeholders involved in addressing domestic violence. This initiative aims to enhance coordination and streamline case management, particularly by reinforcing communication and cooperation among investigating officers at police stations, domestic violence directorates, investigating judges, and courts. Such efforts are geared towards expediting investigations and trials pertaining to domestic violence cases.

Kurdistan Regional Asayesh Agency

Out of the (15) recommendations submitted to the Kurdistan Regional Asayesh Agency in 2022, (7) recommendations have been implemented, (6) recommendations have not been implemented and (2) recommendations were in the process of implementation. Compared to 2023, the number of implemented recommendations has increased to (11) recommendations and the number of recommendations that have not been implemented has increased to (4) recommendations. In this regard the implementation rate becomes (76.7%).

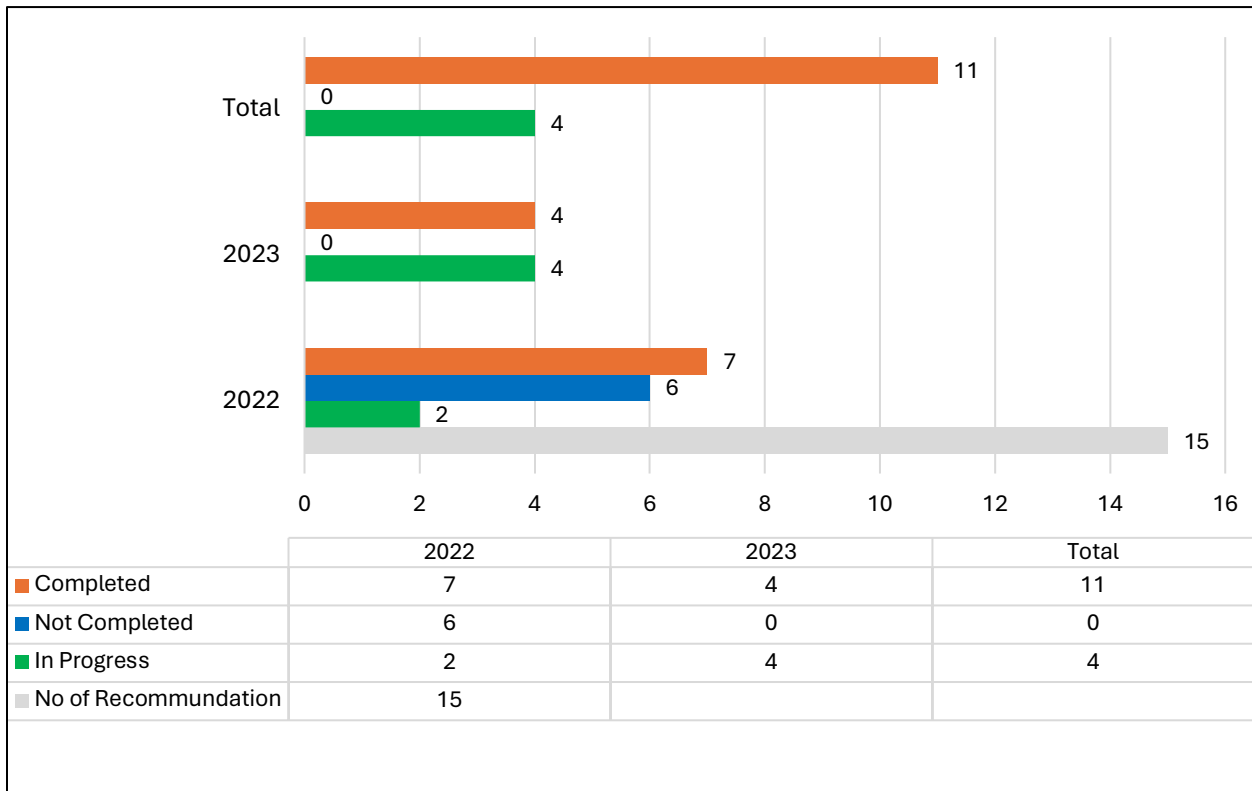


Figure 74: Implementation of Recommendations Related to the Kurdistan Regional Asayesh Agency

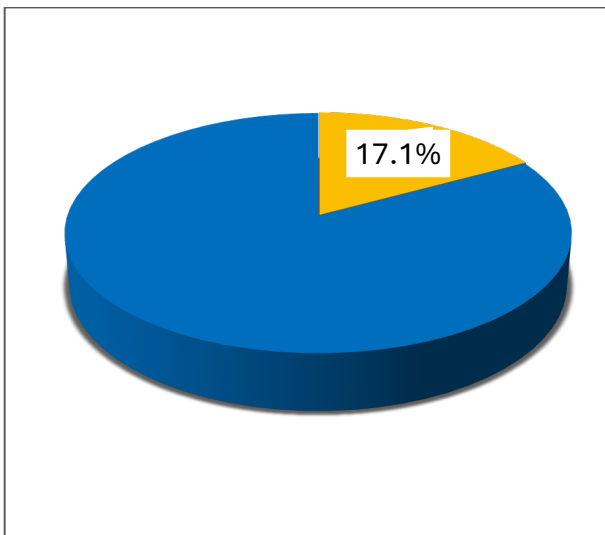


Figure-75 Rates of recommendation execution for 2022-2023

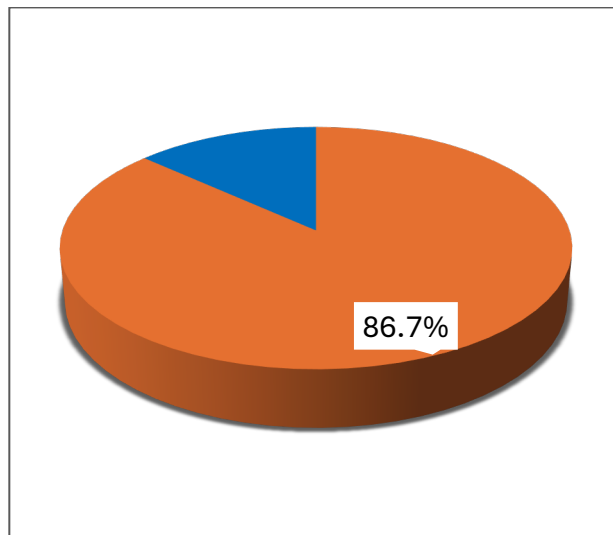


Figure-76 Effort rate of the ministry to completed the recommendations

Implemented Recommendations

1. The Committee advises the Member State to undertake all requisite measures to safeguard children from violence and sexual exploitation, liberate all children held captive by the terrorist organization ISIL, facilitate their reunification with their families, and furnish them with psychological support services. Moreover, the committee suggests augmenting the allocation of essential human, financial, and material resources to alternative care centers and associated child protection services to rehabilitate entrusted children and facilitate their reintegration into familial and communal settings.
2. Safeguard the families of ISIS affiliates who have refrained from involvement in terrorist activities.
3. Strengthening initiatives aimed at fostering adherence to human rights and fundamental freedoms for all demographics, and pursuing investigations and sanctions against perpetrators of violations of international humanitarian and human rights laws.
4. Undertake urgent, thorough, and unbiased inquiries into instances of violations of the right to life and physical safety that transpired during the reign of armed terrorist organizations in specific regions of the Member State, promptly refer them to judicial authorities, provide compensation to the victims, and ensure the administration of complete justice.
5. Implement necessary measures to safeguard civilians during military operations targeting armed terrorist organizations, with a paramount focus on civilian protection, while upholding the principles of discrimination and proportionality.
6. Eradicate the recruitment of minors ensure their non-participation in armed conflicts, and enforce legal prosecution against those involved in such activities.
7. Liberate children held captive by the terrorist organization ISIL and reunite them with their families.
8. Employ all requisite measures to liberate women and girls still held by terrorists and bring the perpetrators to justice.
9. Contemplate the necessity of adopting a national strategy to prevent torture and penalize perpetrators commensurate with the risk, while underscoring that no extraordinary circumstances justify the commission of torture, in accordance with Article 4(2) of the Figure er. Additionally, the Committee advocates for the intensification of training programs for law enforcement personnel on legal frameworks prohibiting torture and international standards in this domain, along with regulations pertaining to detention conditions.
10. Provide training to the judiciary, law enforcement officials, and border police to identify victims of trafficking, ensure their referral to appropriate service providers, and implement all relevant provisions of criminal law.
11. Sustain endeavors to advance the education and training of law enforcement personnel on human rights standards and international humanitarian law pertinent to their operational sphere, encompassing both military and security domains.

Recommendations under current implementation:

1. Enact requisite actions to secure the well-being of the Yazidis and individuals whose whereabouts are yet to be determined.
2. Enhance vigilance regarding illicit drug trafficking across regional border points.
3. Institute a framework facilitating journalists' access to verified data from fundamental and authoritative channels.
4. Foster collaboration with global and local entities proficient in expeditiously addressing the challenges of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), while urging civil society stakeholders to extend financial and logistical aid for the rehabilitation of areas emancipated from armed extremist factions, thereby facilitating the voluntary repatriation of IDPs to their native regions.

Below are the measures, laws, guidelines, procedures, and practical steps taken in implementing the international recommendations:

Erbil Directorate of General Security (Asayesh)

Safeguarding the Rights of the Accused:

- During the interrogation of individuals suspected of criminal activity, rigorous adherence to the Law on the Principles of Criminal Procedure of the Internal Asayesh Forces No. 17 of 2008 ensures the protection of their legal rights. This includes facilitating access to legal counsel, apprising them of their rights, and informing their kin of their situation.
- Legal representatives are permitted to confer with detainees to secure mandates for case investigation. Under the auspices of the investigating magistrate, they meticulously review case materials in the presence of supervising officers.
- Surveillance cameras discreetly stationed within prison corridors serve to monitor inmate activity, initiating investigations promptly in response to any untoward incidents or exigencies. Forensic specialists, each allocated private chambers, undertake the meticulous task of court-related duties.
- Forensic experts, sanctioned by the Ministry of Justice and the Judicial Council, are embedded within Asayesh agencies, bolstering the capacity for a thorough investigation.
- Notification to the families of detainees, articulating the rationale behind apprehension, is extended not solely in cases of terrorism but also as a preventive measure aimed at unraveling terrorist networks and dormant cells.
- Collaborative engagement with international and domestic entities, parliamentary committees, and the Independent Human Rights Commission in Kurdistan, underscores the commitment to facilitate and standardize prisoner interviews and interrogations.
- A comprehensive healthcare facility within the confines of the Asayesh prison ensures prompt medical attention for inmates in need. Prearranged ambulance services stand ready to facilitate the transfer of ailing detainees to external medical facilities when required.

Abolition of Torture

- Torture shall not be employed under any circumstances during interrogation, pursuant to official directive or decision by authority.
- Abuse and torture of detainees are strictly prohibited. Any personnel within the Asayesh agencies found engaging in such acts will be subject to legal prosecution, in accordance with the Penal Law of the Internal Asayesh Forces No. 14 of 2008.
- Upon receipt of any allegations of torture, the prosecutor general diligently fulfills their duties, resulting in numerous cases being pursued in this regard.

Kurdistan Regional Asayesh Agency

Addressing the problem of Congestion

The inauguration of the Kani Goma Correctional Facility in Sulaimani province, constructed in accordance with globally recognized standards, ensures the meticulous observance of all protocols safeguarding human rights. The facility features:

- Comprising (15) halls, each capable of accommodating up to (30) individuals.
- A dedicated structure for solitary confinement, equipped with all essential amenities, consisting of (65) rooms.
- Purpose-built amenities for visitor reception and inmate consultations, adhering strictly to international benchmarks.
- Additionally, the facility includes a designated area for female detainees, staffed exclusively by female guards and supervisors, in alignment with prevailing international norms.

Ensuring the protection of the rights of the accused under investigation.

The Human Rights Division of the Security Agency has been granted comprehensive authorization to conduct visits to all detainees within the purview of the Security Directorate. Should any deficiencies be identified, pertinent authorities within the Security Agency will be duly informed, with the intent to rectify and pursue accountability for any lapses in due process.

In the event of any breaches, an investigative panel will be convened within the agency prior to the submission of a formal report to the court, adhering to the provisions outlined in the Penal Law of the Internal Asayesh Forces No. 14 of 2008 and the Legal Principles Law of the Internal Security Forces No. 17 of 2008.

Erection of a three-story edifice within the Kurdistan Regional Security Agency premises for investigative purposes, equipped with surveillance technology meeting established standards. Several personnel have been brought before the court on charges of legal transgressions, with their ultimate disposition subject to judicial review (Amar).

Action Plan

- Presently, two novel structures are undergoing construction within the Sulaimani Asayesh Directorate with the aim of enhancing facilities dedicated to interrogation and detainee accommodation.
- Two educational modules have been introduced at the Security Academy, catering to security personnel, with a particular emphasis on human rights instruction. This initiative is intended to heighten the consciousness of our officers regarding the implementation of the Kurdistan Regional Plan for Human Rights, in alignment with the protocols established in international human rights treaties.
- Adherence to the provisions outlined in Article 51 of the Criminal Procedure Law No. 23 of 1971, as amended, is mandated for all security investigators.
- Installation of a suggestion box within the confines of the security detention facilities is underway to facilitate the lodging of complaints. The custody of the box will be jointly entrusted to the director and the designated human rights liaison.
- The specialization of security cases pertaining to the statutes delineated in Law No. (5) of 2011, specifically the Law on the Security Agency of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, is imperative.
- Soliciting the participation of judges and prosecutors to operate from within Asayesh agencies and departments is proposed, with the aim of fortifying the integrity of the investigative process and ensuring the safeguarding of cases and defendants.
- Collaboration with local governmental and non-governmental entities, as well as international organizations, is envisaged to facilitate the organization of awareness workshops for the investigative division. Paramount importance is placed on preserving the confidentiality of researchers and research.
- Deployment of informational posters within Asayesh premises is planned to foster heightened awareness among personnel.

Challenges:

- Insufficiency of technical apparatus, including locating instruments for individuals reported missing or involved in criminal activities.
- Necessity for legal provisions addressing situations wherein individuals accused of wrongdoing, sustaining injuries or harm during engagements with law enforcement, seek redress through complaints against security personnel.

Drug-related challenges:

- Insufficiently equipped inspection facilities, coupled with a deficiency in K9 units across official border checkpoints, and notably within certain security divisions.
- Inadequate synchronization among security entities, particularly concerning border guard units.

- Limited international backing, both in terms of tangible resources and moral reinforcement, in the endeavors to combat and deter drug proliferation.
- Deficiencies in the provision of comprehensive training for judicial personnel and investigators, conforming to globally recognized standards, regarding drug interdiction strategies and the enforcement protocols outlined in the Drug Elimination Act.

Suggestions

- Addressing the issue of overcrowding in prisons and correctional facilities is imperative, as it constitutes a form of inhumane treatment and warrants immediate attention from governmental authorities.
- The shortage of essential medications in healthcare centers can be mitigated by coordinating with the Ministry of Health to ensure their provision. Additionally, there is a pressing need for ambulances within the Erbil Asayesh Directorate to facilitate the transportation of ill inmates to external medical facilities, along with ensuring the availability of medical personnel within prisons and correctional facilities.
- It is essential to equip rehabilitation with drug testing apparatus to expedite legal proceedings and ensure timely adjudication of cases involving drug-related offenses. Currently, the (B-C-Mass) equipment, designated for quality control, has remained unused for a year, underscoring the necessity for prompt intervention to address this issue.
- Segregation of individuals with substance abuse issues from the general prison population warrants attention from the (KRG) to deter further instances of drug usage. Despite the establishment of the Drug Eradication Directorate, concerted efforts are required to effectively address this concern.
- The admission of all sentenced individuals to rehabilitation falls within the purview of the Ministry of Social Affairs. However, the lack of requisite infrastructure has led to the delay in admitting a significant number of prisoners. Resolving this issue, such as the delayed opening of section C in the Erbil Correctional Facility, is imperative to fulfill governmental obligations.
- To ensure the well-being of inmates, it is essential to augment the provision of medications within rehabilitation and facilitate regular visits by medical practitioners.
- The absence of essential equipment and delays in the receipt of fingerprint evidence significantly contribute to legal setbacks in detainee cases. Furthermore, court proceedings are frequently prolonged due to the sheer volume of cases inundating the criminal court. Subsequently, matters are further deferred during the appellate process, resulting in delays spanning 2-3 months. This issue necessitates prompt resolution by the judicial council, which could be achieved by augmenting the presence of investigating judges and bolstering the capacity of criminal courts to expedite case adjudication.

Procedures requisite for the enactment of the Asayesh Agency's recommendations

Following a sequence of workshops and roundtable discussions, the Office of the Coordinator for International Advocacy delineated precise measures. Subsequently, under the auspices of the Office of the Prime Minister, directives were issued to pertinent stakeholders, including the Asayesh Agency, for the implementation of international recommendations within stipulated timelines.

Dedicated to eradicating torture and mistreatment.

- Under no circumstances should any accused or convicted individual be subjected to inhumane, brutal, physical, or psychological abuse by security and counter-terrorism personnel in the execution of their duties.
- Direct any investigating party handling the case to document the statements of the accused as a precautionary measure for investigators concerning any claims of torture if such allegations have not transpired, and to safeguard evidence pertinent to the case should the accused disavow these statements.
- Instruct all stakeholders engaged in criminal investigations to advance technological solutions for investigative purposes and the safeguarding of criminal data and evidence.
- Advocate for the presence of legal counsel at the onset of the accused's statement, collaborating with the Kurdistan Bar Association to devise a framework ensuring routine consultations between detainees and lawyers, who must be present during apprehension and interrogation.
- Mandate that law enforcement personnel provide suspects with clear explanations for their arrest, disclose charges during depositions and interrogations and maintain ongoing communication with the accused and their legal representation regarding case developments.
- Facilitate visits by relatives of both accused individuals and detainees, as well as enable telephone correspondence between them, adhering to established protocols within rehabilitation and detention centers.
- Establishment of healthcare facilities within security agencies' detention and retention centers, overseen by the Ministry of Health.
- Guaranteeing access to adequate medical assistance and hygiene provisions for female detainees, recognizing the imperative of such services to uphold appropriate standards of care.
- Implementing specialized training programs focused on the prevention of torture and cruel treatment for forensic examiners, prosecution personnel, and all relevant stakeholders involved in inquiries. These initiatives shall be conducted in collaboration with the Judicial Council, pertinent entities, and organizations.
- Heightened endeavors are imperative to alleviate overcrowding in detention facilities, with the prioritization of constructing new infrastructure adhering to international benchmarks incorporated into the agendas and initiatives of relevant entities.

- Prompt notification of any infractions or grievances falling under the purview of the prison administrative unit to the prosecutor general.
- Ensuring that the examining magistrate or judicial investigator assumes the responsibility of questioning the accused within 24 hours of apprehension, with interrogations conducted exclusively by judicial personnel.
- Apprising defendants of their entitlements under the law, encompassing the right to refrain from self-incrimination until legal counsel is present, and to furnish statements voluntarily.
- Cultivating an understanding among security personnel that the accused possesses the right to legal representation throughout all stages of interrogation, not solely during trial proceedings.
- Upholding that detention is exclusively administered by lawful and duly authorized institutions, in alignment with Iraqi legislation and international human rights norms, while transparently disclosing the security authorities entrusted with detention duties, the exigencies necessitating detention, and the locations of detention centers.
- Enhancing awareness among security personnel that a confession from the accused does not constitute the sole basis for substantiating charges, advocating for the procurement of diverse forms of evidence, including witness testimonies, physical and digital evidence, and documentary proof.
- Ensuring equitable compensation for detainees subjected to torture.
- Facilitating enhanced communication and coordination among all entities tasked with justice administration through case management conferences. This strategic approach aims to foster horizontal accountability, fortify judicial oversight, enhance operational efficiency, and mitigate instances of unwarranted protracted pretrial detention. The membership of the Case Management Meetings (Committee) shall be members of the Judicial Council, the Prosecutor General, the security agencies, the Bar Association, and the civil society concerned.

Dedicated to eradicating trafficking in persons.

- Providing comprehensive training and enhancing the capacities of personnel stationed at border checkpoints, airports, and medical facilities who interface with international visitors initially.

Regarding drugs and psychotropic substances:

- Undertake initiatives aimed at developing the Kurdistan Regional Government's strategy to mitigate and address drug dependency within the Kurdistan Region, focusing on two primary pillars: preventative measures and rehabilitation initiatives through the establishment of specialized treatment centers.
- Collaboratively formulate a comprehensive, enduring strategic blueprint under the purview of the Directorate of Combating Drugs and Psychotropic Substances within the Asayesh Agency. This endeavor necessitates close coordination with pertinent governmental entities

such as the Ministries of Health, Education, Labor, and Social Affairs, as well as Planning Intellectual Influences.

- Enhance border control protocols and reinforce the operational synergy among security personnel stationed at these entry points to proactively monitor and impede the illicit trafficking of narcotics.
- Recognize that the dynamics of drug-related incidents involve an intricate interplay between sellers, buyers, and manufacturers, often organized into cohesive syndicates. Accordingly, intensified measures are imperative to disrupt and dismantle these criminal networks.
- Ensure adequate staffing of qualified pharmacists at regional border checkpoints to proficiently detect and intercept potentially addictive substances.
- Foster enhanced collaboration between academic institutions specializing in law and security agencies to incorporate coursework addressing drug-related research and intervention strategies into the academic curriculum for students.

General Directorate of Counter-Terrorism

Out of the (4) recommendations submitted to the General Directorate of Counter-Terrorism in 2022, (3) recommendations have been implemented and (1) has not been implemented. Compared to 2023, the recommendations implemented are (3) recommendations and the recommendations not implemented is (1) recommendation. The reason for the failure to implement the recommendation is that the amendment of the anti-terrorism law is the duty of the Kurdistan Parliament, but it should be worked on in the future. In this regard the implementation rate becomes (75%).

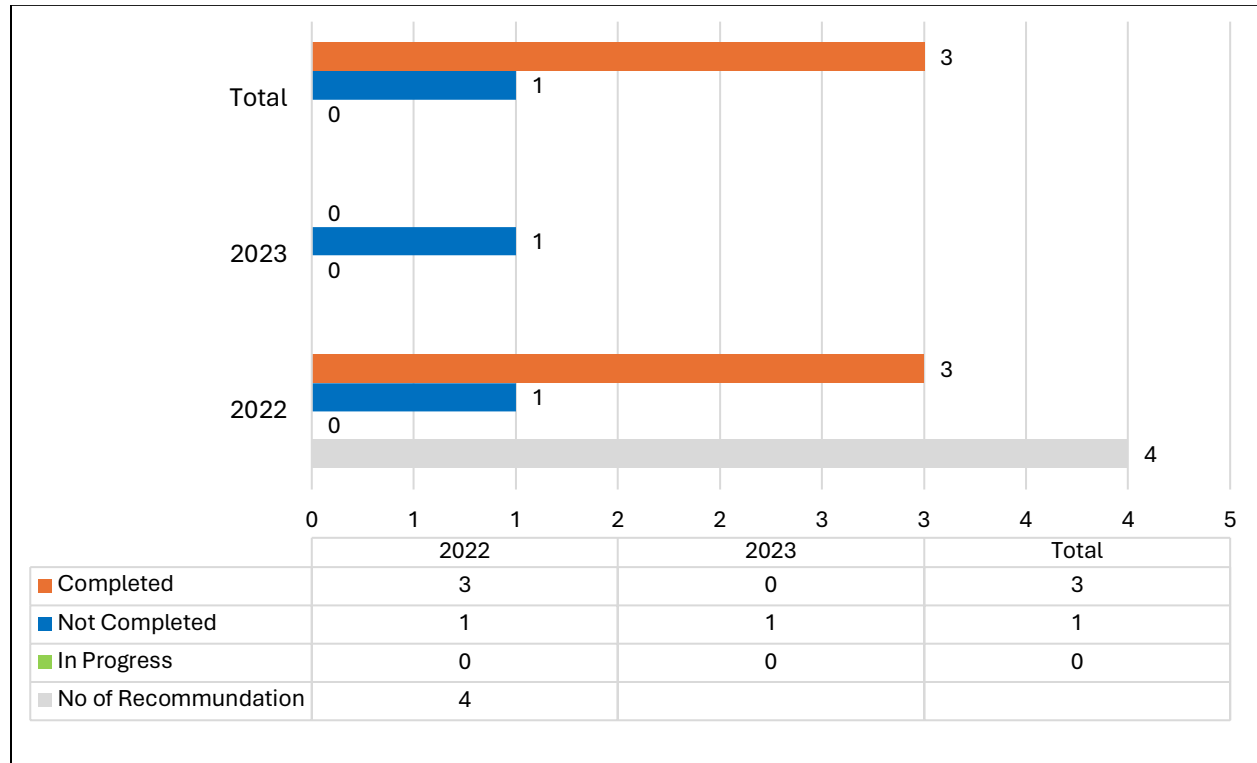


Figure 77: Implementation of Recommendations Related to the General Directorate of Counter-Terrorism

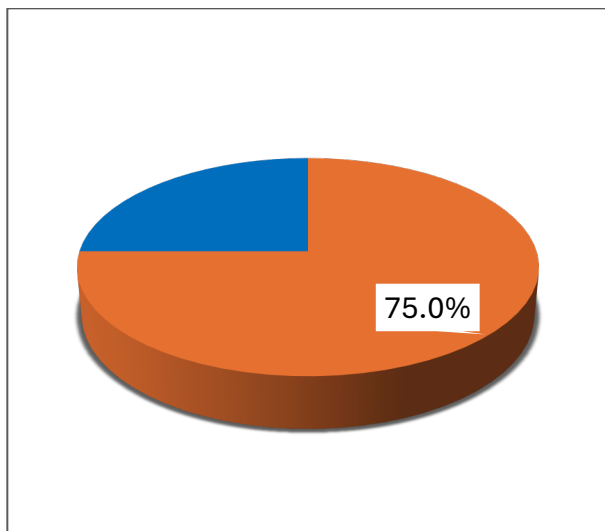


Figure-78 Rates of recommendation execution for 2022-2023

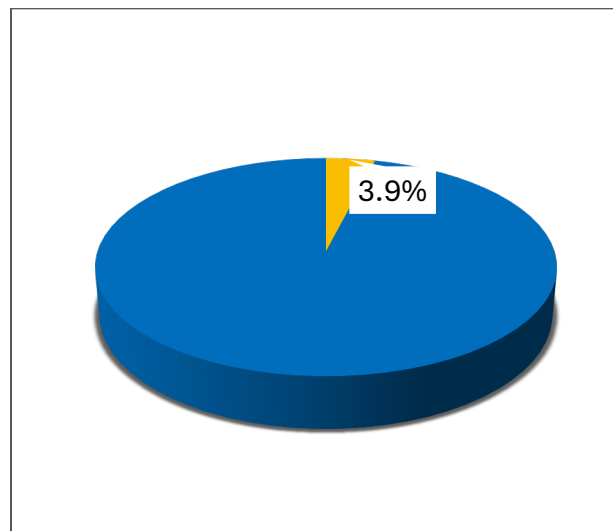


Figure-79 Effort rate of the ministry to complete the recommendations

Implemented Recommendations

1. Advanced endeavors aimed at countering terrorism.
2. Guarantee that any pertinent or novel counter-terrorism legislation incorporates absolute adherence to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and that strategies employed to address terrorism are entirely in alignment with the Covenant.
3. Persist in safeguarding the populace against terrorism, recognized as a significant origin of widespread human rights transgressions.

Unmet Recommendations

1. Modify the Counter-Terrorism Legislation to harmonize the rights of the accused regarding detention with the imperative of safeguarding society from terrorist activities.

Below are the measures, laws, guidelines, procedures, and practical steps taken in implementing the international recommendations:

Relevant Legislation on Countering Terrorism

Within the General Directorate of Counter-Terrorism, a dedicated unit for forensic investigation operates under the purview of the Judicial Council, comprising both male and female forensic experts. Their mandate extends until the resolution of cases involving accused individuals or offenders.

During the period spanning from (1/1/2023 to 31/12/2023), the General Directorate of Counter-Terrorism held a total of 291 detainees.

- Out of these, 185 detainees have been either released or transferred.
- Presently, 106 detainees remain in custody.
- The cases of 55 detainees are currently under active investigation.
- Proceedings for 22 detainees have been transferred to the Second Criminal Court of Erbil.
- Additionally, 29 individuals have been subject to judicial penalties subsequent to the conclusion of investigative procedures.

Addressing Cyber Terrorism

In the Kurdistan Region, the absence of specific legislation pertaining to cyber terrorism presents a legal challenge. Nonetheless, persistent endeavors are underway to apprehend individuals involved in cyber-terrorism through the application of Iraqi Penal Code No. 111 of 1969, as revised.

Required actions to execute the suggestions put forth by the General Directorate of Counter-Terrorism

Following a comprehensive array of workshops and roundtable discussions, the Office of the Coordinator for International Advocacy has delineated specific actions. These directives have been channeled by the Office of the Prime Minister to pertinent stakeholders, including the General Directorate of Counter-Terrorism.

Dedicated to eradicating torture and mistreatment.

- Under no circumstances should any accused or convicted individual be subjected to inhumane, brutal, physical, or psychological abuse by security and counter-terrorism personnel in the execution of their duties.
- Direct any investigating party handling the case to document the statements of the accused as a precautionary measure for investigators concerning any claims of torture if such allegations have not transpired, and to safeguard evidence pertinent to the case should the accused disavow these statements.
- Instruct all stakeholders engaged in criminal investigations to advance technological solutions for investigative purposes and the safeguarding of criminal data and evidence.
- Advocate for the presence of legal counsel at the onset of the accused's statement, collaborating with the Kurdistan Bar Association to devise a framework ensuring routine consultations between detainees and lawyers, who must be present during apprehension and interrogation.
- Mandate that law enforcement personnel provide suspects with clear explanations for their arrest, disclose charges during depositions and interrogations, and maintain ongoing communication with the accused and their legal representation regarding case developments.
- Facilitate visits by relatives of both accused individuals and detainees, as well as enable telephone correspondence between them, adhering to established protocols within rehabilitation and detention centers.
- Establishment of healthcare facilities within security agencies' detention and retention centers, overseen by the Ministry of Health.
- Guaranteeing access to adequate medical assistance and hygiene provisions for female detainees, recognizing the imperative of such services to uphold appropriate standards of care.
- Implementing specialized training programs focused on the prevention of torture and cruel treatment for forensic examiners, prosecution personnel, and all relevant stakeholders involved in inquiries. These initiatives shall be conducted in collaboration with the Judicial Council, pertinent entities, and organizations.
- Heightened endeavors are imperative to alleviate overcrowding in detention facilities, with the prioritization of constructing new infrastructure adhering to international benchmarks incorporated into the agendas and initiatives of relevant entities.

- Prompt notification of any infractions or grievances falling under the purview of the prison administrative unit to the prosecutor general.
- Ensuring that the examining magistrate or judicial investigator assumes the responsibility of questioning the accused within 24 hours of apprehension, with interrogations conducted exclusively by judicial personnel.
- Apprising defendants of their entitlements under the law, encompassing the right to refrain from self-incrimination until legal counsel is present, and to furnish statements voluntarily.
- Cultivating an understanding among security personnel that the accused possesses the right to legal representation throughout all stages of interrogation, not solely during trial proceedings.
- Upholding that detention is exclusively administered by lawful and duly authorized institutions, in alignment with Iraqi legislation and international human rights norms, while transparently disclosing the security authorities entrusted with detention duties, the exigencies necessitating detention, and the locations of detention centers.
- Enhancing awareness among security personnel that a confession from the accused does not constitute the sole basis for substantiating charges, advocating for the procurement of diverse forms of evidence, including witness testimonies, physical and digital evidence, and documentary proof.
- Ensuring equitable compensation for detainees subjected to torture.
- Facilitating enhanced communication and coordination among all entities tasked with justice administration through case management conferences. This strategic approach aims to foster horizontal accountability, fortify judicial oversight, enhance operational efficiency, and mitigate instances of unwarranted protracted pretrial detention. The membership of the Case Management Meetings (Committee) shall be members of the Judicial Council, the Prosecutor General, the security agencies, the Bar Association, and the civil society concerned.

Commission of Integrity

Out of the four recommendations submitted to the Commission of Integrity in 2022, (2) recommendations have been implemented, (1) recommendation has not been implemented and (1) recommendation was in the process of implementation. Compared to 2023, the implemented recommendations have increased to (3) and the non-implemented recommendation is (1) recommendation. In this regard the implementation rate becomes (75%).

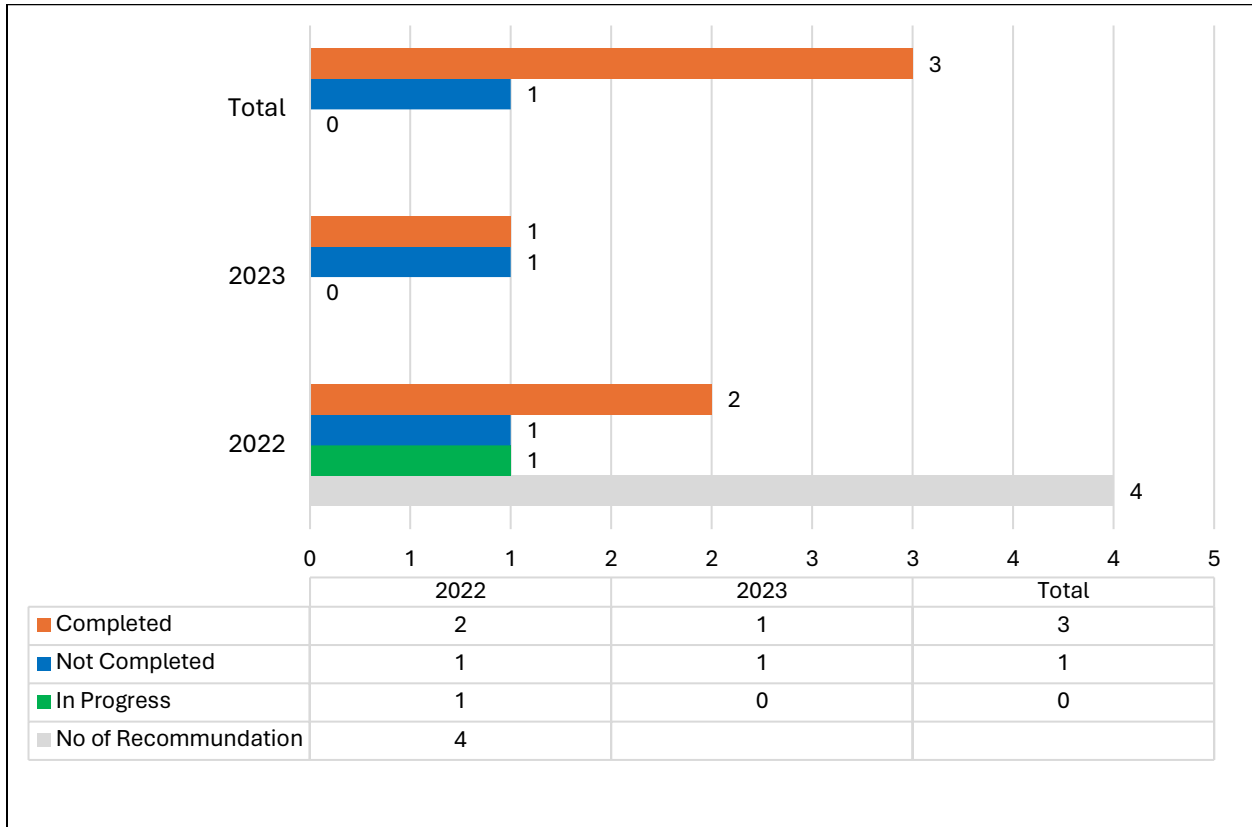


Figure 80: Implementation of Recommendations Related to the Commission of Integrity

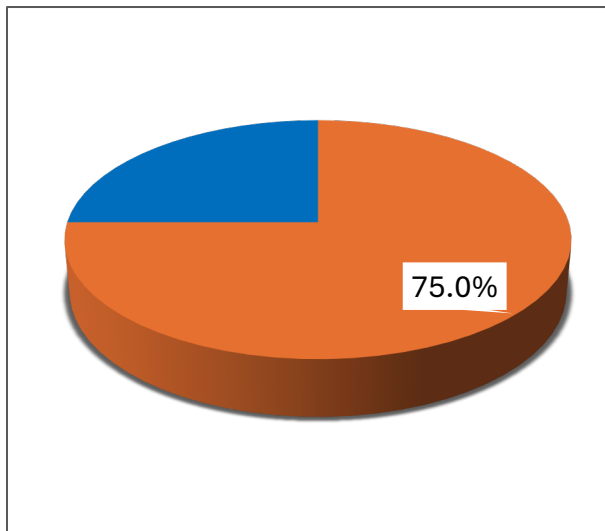


Figure-81 Rates of recommendation execution for 2022-2023

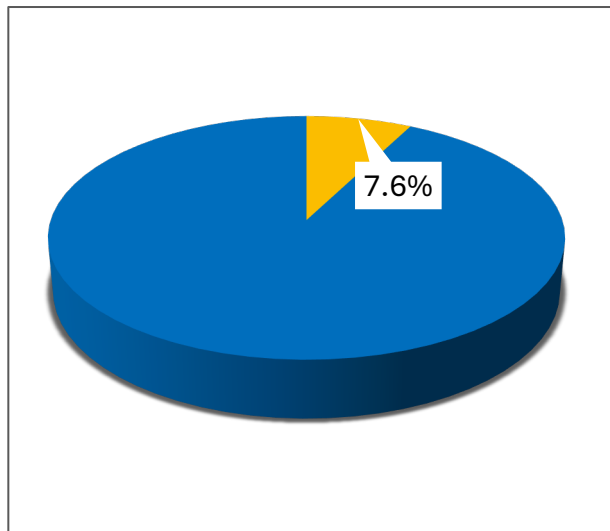


Figure-82 Effort rate of the ministry to completed the recommendations

Implemented Recommendations

1. Advocate for endeavors aimed at mitigating financial and administrative malfeasance in strict adherence to international statutes, fostering equitable access to public amenities.
2. Persist in endeavors to eradicate financial and administrative malpractice.
3. Sustain endeavors to bolster the supremacy of law and guarantee the autonomous and unbiased execution of justice by combatting corruption and forestalling exemption from accountability.

Unmet Recommendations

1. Systematize gradations of malfeasance and arrange them in order of precedence based on their potential impact on national security.

Below are the measures, laws, guidelines, procedures, and practical steps taken in implementing the international recommendations:

Anti-Corruption Strategy

In alignment with the 2005 UN Convention on Anti-Corruption, the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 2005 Iraqi Constitution, and grounded on the amended Corruption Commission Law No. 7 of 2014, alongside pertinent legislation concerning the reform of Kurdistan, the National Strategy of the Corruption Commission for Combating Corruption in the Kurdistan Region (2021-2025) has been officially ratified.

This comprehensive strategy delineates into three distinct sectors, supplemented by an appendix. Initially, a rigorous evaluation of official institutions is conducted, encompassing the Kurdistan Parliament, the executive branch inclusive of the Presidency, and the Kurdistan Regional Government. Subsequently, scrutiny extends to the judiciary and autonomous bodies, including the Financial Supervision Bureau, the Intelligence Commission, the Human Rights Commission, and the Independent High Commission for Elections and Referendums.

The second sector is dedicated to political entities and civil society, encompassing political parties, civil society organizations, and the media, while the third sector pertains to the private sphere. Each sector is accompanied by detailed implementation plans, with the overarching timeline spanning four years. A comprehensive review of the strategy's outcomes is slated for presentation by the conclusion of 2025.

The Office of Prevention and Transparency within the (KRG) has meticulously compiled the inaugural report on the implementation progress of the national anti-corruption strategy within official institutions, slated for imminent release. The head of the Corruption Commission has been extended an invitation to present the report's intricacies at an upcoming Council of Ministers meeting.

On 13/3/2024, the Kurdistan Regional Prosecutor's Office issued its inaugural report assessing the degree of implementation of the National Strategy to Combat Corruption in the Kurdistan Region, previously endorsed by the Council of Ministers in September 2021, with a specific focus on achieving anti-corruption objectives and fostering transparency and accountability through targeted mechanisms.

The report encompasses an array of recommendations for official institutions within the strategic framework, encompassing initiatives such as anti-corruption awareness campaigns, bolstering internal oversight mechanisms, legislative amendments, capacity building, and staff training initiatives, alongside proposals for establishing a dedicated corruption court within the Kurdistan Region.

In acknowledging the submission of the report, the Council of Ministers reaffirms its unwavering commitment to advancing transparency, accountability, and the fight against corruption. Simultaneously, it has mandated pertinent ministries and stakeholders to diligently oversee the implementation of the outlined recommendations.

Classification of levels of misconduct

To date, there has been no systematic categorization of corruption incidents based on their nature and severity. It is imperative to expedite measures in this regard.

Initiatives to combat financial and administrative malfeasance

The Integrity Board diligently scrutinizes instances of corruption, conducts inquiries within specialized judicial forums at the provincial level, and actively engages in legal proceedings as a representative of public interests concerning corruption matters. Additionally, it undertakes investigations into cases initiated by the Integrity Board or referred to the High Court for adjudication and appeal.

During the period spanning from January 1st, 2023, to November 30th, 2023, the specialized provincial courts in the Kurdistan Region registered a total of 214 new cases pertaining to criminal offenses, including corruption. Furthermore, there were 279 cases carried over from previous years. Of these, 393 cases were under consideration, with 248 cases undergoing judicial proceedings, 103 cases successfully resolved, and 42 cases remanded for further review.

Table 53 Number of Suits in Court

Open Applications for Specialized Courts (Crime/Crime)	
Applications filed until November 2023	219
Special Requests for Previous Years	279
The total	498

Table 54 Specifics Number of suits in court

Open Applications for Specialized Courts (Crime/Catn)	
Applications in court	233
Determined Applications	123
The returned Applications	42
The total	398

All appealed (appealed) claims in the post-trial phase in 2023

Table55 Number of Appealed Claims

Appeals Applications in the post-trial phase in 2023	
The number of appeals in criminal court	10
The number of appeals is in the Court of Catn	6
The total	16

Convicts by positions in 2023, which only includes those convicted and not released:

Table 56 Statistics of Convicts by Positions

Statistics of Convicts by Positions	
Functional rank	Punished
Former Minister	1
Former Agent of the Ministry	1
The General Manager	2
Manager	8
Asayesh	4
Employee	38
Lieutenant	2
Colonel of Police	2
Police	10
The complainer	1
Businessman	7
Owner of the company	1
Employee of the company	4

Cafeteria owner	3
Gas station owner	1
The contractor	3
Accountant	3
The microscope	1
Owner of Customs Export Office	1
Mukhtar	1
Zerevani	1
Citizen	1
Driver	1
The total	97

Statistics of investigations on corruption cases for 2020 – 2022:

Table 57 Number of investigations on corruption cases for 2020 – 2022

Statistics of investigations conducted for the years 2020 - 2022	2020	2021	2022	The total
Number of investigations by complaints filed	67	92	179	338
Complaints filed	44	52	51	147
Cases referred to the prosecutor general	21	38	36	95
Cases under investigation by the prosecutor general	169	231	388	788
Cases closed during the investigation stage due to lack of sufficient evidence	45	132	97	274
These cases have been referred to the prosecutor's office	71	145	118	334

Statistics of cases registered from 2014 to 2023 related to corruption crimes:

Table 58 Number of cases filed from 2014 to 2023 on corruption cases

Number of cases registered from 2014 to 2023 for corruption (The crime of graft)	
Request in the investigation phase	50
The accused has been referred to a specialized court	28
closed cases	13
The total	91

The Pensioner's Case

Audit of the pension cases of judges, prosecutors, expert employees, and Peshmerga forces by the Corruption Commission:

Table 59 Stages of follow-up to Peshmerga retirement

Comparison of the process of fighting corruption by the Commission of Integrity			
Matter	2020	2021	2022
Illegal retirement	Cancellation of illegal pensions by 40%	Cancellation salary of 1630 illegal pensions	
Comparison of the process of fighting corruption by the Commission of Integrity			
Matter	Matter	Matter	Matter
Pensions salary of judges, prosecutors, qualified employees	Rectification of Salary for 437 pensioners: Restoration of Three Hundred and Fifty Million Dinars to Government Funds	Corrected 100%	
Pensioners of Peshmerga forces			2000 Peshmerga pension cases have not had legal problems. Regarding the retirement files of the 70th and 80th units, they have agreed to hand over their files.
Peshmerga forces			

Audit of employees' cases by the Integrity Commission:

Table 60 Follow-up stages for employees' cases

Fighting corruption by the Board of Integrity			
Matter	2020	2021	2022
Employee Case Number	307869	410507	174365
Audited case number	222111	355549	157373
Increased rank number	–	1775	10548

Audit of the cases of the disabled by the Integrity Commission:

Table 61 and Social Security Beneficiaries, Stages of follow-up on disabilities cases

Comparison of the process of fighting corruption by the Commission of Integrity			
Matter	2020	2021	2022
Beneficiaries of the disabled	A special committee has been formed by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs	Out of 13,249 disabled employees, 648 biometric codes were duplicated	14,000 Fourteen thousand disabled people have lost their salaries and are not eligible
Social protection			88,000 Eighty-eight thousand people received salaries that many do not deserve

Audit of the cases of martyrs, Anfal victims and political prisoners by the Integrity Commission:

Table 62 Stages of follow-up on the cases of martyrs and political prisoners

The case of martyrs and political prisoners at the level Kurdistan Region					
Case type	Case Number	Audit	Approved	Notable	Uncovered
Political prisoners	23769	1029	760	269	0
exposure to chemistry	9202	203	50	187	4
Genocide loners	361	361	295	14	52
Complaint	1041	1041	0	0	0
Employees	1359	1359	1155	204	0

Digitization of Financial Interest Disclosure

Within the framework of financial interest disclosure, as mandated by Law No. 3 of 2011 and its subsequent amendment, Law No. 7 of 2014, by the Board of Corruption, the core objectives of the Board encompass integrity, transparency, and accountability.

This initiative will be executed in collaboration with the British Embassy, facilitated through the Technical Assistance Agency for Iraq, subsequent to an agreement with the Kurdistan Regional Commission of Integrity. The initial phase is projected to span from six months to a year.

The advantages of transitioning to digital platforms for financial interest disclosure forms are manifold. It will streamline processes, curtail expenses, and facilitate identification of surplus assets among senior positions, as stipulated by statutory requirements for financial interest

disclosure. Moreover, it will significantly enhance transparency standards in Kurdistan, a measure yet to be fully realized across Iraq.

However, successful digitization necessitates heightened cooperation from pertinent institutions, alongside comprehensive training for system personnel and revisions to the guidelines governing financial interest disclosure.

High Election and Referendum Commission

Comments of the High Election and Referendum Commission on the implementation of specific recommendations Rights of persons with disabilities

1. Ensure the entitlement of individuals with disabilities to assert their rights concerning voting and candidacy in electoral processes.
2. Foster the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in electoral activities and eliminate constraints impeding their involvement.
3. Nullify judicial rulings that obstruct individuals with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities from exercising their electoral franchise and pursuing candidacy, while affirming their engagement in political and societal affairs.
4. Streamline the engagement of individuals with disabilities in the electoral sphere, guaranteeing their seamless access to polling venues, the opportunity for candidacy, and the provision of electoral resources and information in formats accessible to diverse needs, including Braille and sign language Easy Reading System.

Ensuring the enfranchisement of individuals with disabilities

In accordance with the protocols outlined by the Council of Commissioners and the procedures governing voter registration renewal, specialized teams will be established at all voter registration renewal centers to facilitate the enrollment of individuals with disabilities in the voter registry, thereby safeguarding their electoral rights.

There are no restrictions imposed on the candidacy of individuals with disabilities, save for the requirement of mental competence and adherence to standard criteria such as age and education, in line with typical candidacy norms.

On the day of the elections, concerted efforts will be undertaken to ensure unfettered access to all polling stations for individuals with disabilities.

During peak hours, measures will be implemented to prevent undue delays for individuals with disabilities, granting them exemption from any obligations to physically attend the polling station.

In instances where an individual with a disability requires assistance in exercising their voting rights and lacks accompanying support, all polling station managers are directed to provide impartial assistance, reflecting the preferences of the individual with a disability in full.

Participation of individuals with disabilities in the political process

The Legislation on the Rights and Privileges of Persons with Disabilities underscores this as an inherent entitlement, with no explicit provisions impeding their voting or candidacy rights. Specifically articulated in Article 2, paragraph 1, is the assurance of upholding all fundamental rights and freedoms on par with the general populace.

In practical application, facilitating the engagement of individuals with disabilities in the electoral process entails the removal of all impediments. Measures such as providing adequate seating and necessary equipment on election day to ensure ease of voting, or designating specialized polling stations mindful of their unique physical requirements, serve to foster inclusivity and accessibility.

Appropriate actions are required to enact the suggestions put forth by the High Election and Referendum Commission.

Following an extensive series of workshops and roundtable discussions, the Office of the Coordinator for International Advocacy has proposed tailored initiatives. These initiatives, under the guidance of the Office of the Prime Minister, have been communicated to pertinent stakeholders, including the High Election and Referendum Commission, to be implemented in alignment with international recommendations within the designated timeframe outlined in the plan."

On the matter concerning the rights of individuals with disabilities:

Enable the engagement of individuals with disabilities in electoral processes and ensure their accessibility to polling stations, fostering a conducive environment for seamless voting. Furthermore, promote their active involvement in candidacy pursuits, while ensuring the provision of election-related materials and information in formats that are readily perceivable and accessible, including but not limited to Braille, sign language, and simplified textual systems.

Kurdistan Labors' Union

The Kurdistan Labors' Union, an integral entity dedicated to safeguarding and enhancing the welfare of laborers, advancing their standard of living, and fostering a culture of professional and organizational development among workers, has undertaken numerous initiatives aimed at upholding workers' rights. These efforts include:

1. Formulating the KRG Labor Law.
2. Crafting the Pension and Social Security Act.
3. Ensuring consistent monthly engagement in the Executive Council of the Pension and Social Security Treasury for Workers.
4. Active involvement in various meetings, discussions, and seminars focused on labor-related issues.
5. Contribution to the determination of wage structures, although regrettably, the committee responsible for this task has not convened for two years.
6. Participation in the Danasi Committee, which addresses the minimum wages for unskilled workers.

Ensuring the diligent pursuit and resolution of workers' grievances

To uphold the rights and address the concerns of employees within the workplace, whether through engagement with union representatives or legal recourse, the following data outlines the instances of such grievances:

Table 63: Worker Case Statistics

Locations	The court case	Settled within the union headquarters
Erbil	–	75
Sulaimani	16	38
Duhok	–	310
Halabja	–	110
Soran	–	5
Garmian	3	100
Zakho	7	139
The total	26	777

Enhance workers' wages:

The union has suggested augmenting the remuneration of employees from (350,000) to (520,000) dinars, citing that this adjustment is necessary to ensure the financial security of workers upon retirement, mitigating potential monthly deficits.

Challenges within the collaborative committees in which he holds membership in the union

- The trade union participates in committees established under the framework of Pension and Social Security Law No. 39 of 1971, comprising representatives from the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs as well as the Chamber of Trade and Industry. Regrettably, the remuneration provided to union workers' representatives is considerably inadequate. We have proactively corresponded with the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, the Ministry of Labor, and the Executive Council via the Ministry of Labor to the Ministry of Finance, yet we have not received any formal response to date.
- The importance of occupational health and safety is underscored in the Labor Law, leading to the formation of a dedicated committee. However, practical implementation in the Kurdistan Region is lacking, despite it being under the purview of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs. Consequently, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs has tasked the Labor Inspection Sub-Committee with assuming responsibility for these matters.
- In the course of drafting the labor bill, the union advocated for the establishment of a national center or institution for occupational health and safety. Unfortunately, our proposal did not receive due consideration. It is imperative to establish such a center, mirroring the existence of a national institution for occupational health and safety within the federal government.

Worker Fatality and Injury Statistics

In the year 2023, the Kurdistan Region recorded a total of 53 incidents involving worker fatalities and injuries. Among these, there were 25 recorded injuries and 28 documented fatalities, as delineated below:

Table 64: Worker Fatality and Injury Statistics

Locations	Internal	External	The Total
Erbil	6	5	11
Sulaimani	16	8	24
Duhok	6	1	7
Halabja	–	–	–
Soran	–	–	–
Garmian	10	–	10
Zakho	1	–	1
The total	39	14	53

Directorate of Job Opportunities

The labor organization advocates for the establishment of employment directorates across all administrative divisions within the Kurdistan Region, functioning as hubs facilitating job placements for a broader spectrum of unemployed individuals following registration. With the advancements in communication technology, the realization of this proposal becomes readily feasible, enabling a more precise assessment of unemployment rates.

Office of NGOs

Introduction of the Office

- Directly linked to the Council of Ministers.
- Duty to implement Law No. (1) of 2011 and Regulation No. (4) of 2011.
- Supervising the organizations in terms of administration, finance, and technical.

Organizations data

- Total Registered Organizations: (5001) Organizations.
- Dissolved and undocumented organizations: (335) organizations.

Newly registered organization:

- In 2021: (185).
- In 2022: (252).
- In 2023: (175).

Execution of responsibilities

Guidance and determinations issued by the Presidency of the Bureau and Office of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) pertaining to the structuring, enhancement, and institutionalization of organizational functions and operations within the Kurdistan Region, in alignment with the provisions outlined in Law No. (1) Regulation No. (4) of 2011 governing NGO operations.

- Agenda items of the ninth cabinet session of the Kurdistan Regional Government.
- Counsel from the Presidency of the Office of the Council of Ministers.
- Recommendations endorsed by the Financial Supervision Bureau and the Kurdistan Parliament.
- Proposals articulated by the Integrity Commission (National Strategic Initiative for Anti-Corruption).
- Counsel from the Prosecutor General.

Referring to the missive from this Presidency bearing No. (2502) dated 15/6/2023, pertaining to the inquiries of foreign consulates, and reflecting upon the convening on 14/6/2023 at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, attended by the Prime Minister Foreign, Coordinator of International Advocacy, Director General of the Office of the Ministry of Interior, Head of the Office of NGOs, Director General of the Joint Coordination and Crisis Center in the Ministry of Interior, and Director General of Cooperation and Development Coordination in the Ministry of Planning.

The Office of the Coordinator for International Advocacy engages with international entities operating in the humanitarian domain, particularly those issuing periodic reports on diverse human rights concerns, and diligently monitors their feedback.

Conversely, our bureau is tasked with overseeing and executing the Human Rights Plan of the Kurdistan Region. International entities serve as pivotal partners in collaboration and synchronization toward the plan's realization. Over the course of the ninth cabinet's four-year tenure from (1/1/2020) to (5/6/2023), upwards of (1540) correspondences have been exchanged with international stakeholders and organizations, alongside over (38) roundtables and workshops conducted in conjunction with international bodies. Additionally, numerous meetings have been convened with them.

In light of the aforementioned considerations and the substance of the meeting's correspondence on 14/6/2023 at the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, fostering amicable relations with international entities is imperative. It is paramount to streamline their operations and alleviate bureaucratic hurdles to facilitate their endeavors in the Kurdistan Region, particularly concerning aid to refugees, and adhering to international recommendations within the framework of regional planning. Leveraging the expertise and resources of international organizations across all sectors in this capacity is deemed beneficial.

In correspondence received, numerous consulates have articulated several requests for consideration. These requests encompass the following:

First, Clarity on the duration and procedural aspects involved in the renewal of organizational management decisions, alongside elucidation on the rationale behind non-renewals.

Second, Reevaluation of the necessity for organizations to furnish donor contracts as a prerequisite for the renewal of administrative decisions.

Third, Requirement for organizations to furnish comprehensive lists containing the names of beneficiaries engaged in organizational projects, as well as participants attending conferences and workshops.

Fourth, Advocacy for facilitating the operational autonomy of organizations, enabling them to operate across all regions within and outside the Kurdistan Region in alignment with the resources allocated by donors.

Fifth, Advocacy for gender parity within the frameworks of projects and activities undertaken by organizations, ensuring equality between men and women.

In response to the requests received and in accordance with the directives outlined by the Council of Ministers, the following decisions have been made:

1. The establishment of a streamlined platform for the acquisition and renewal of licenses for foreign entities is underway. This initiative aims to consolidate procedures, alleviating the need for organizations to engage with multiple entities and offices in the execution of their operations.
2. We express complete endorsement of the second, third, and fifth provisions articulated in the aforementioned correspondence.
3. With regard to the fourth provision pertaining to the incentivization and prioritization of project execution by international entities, deliberation, and consideration are ongoing.

Kurdistan Parliament

In 2021, Out of the (37) recommendations submitted to the Kurdistan Parliament, (7) recommendations have been implemented and (30) recommendations have not been implemented. Compared to 2023, the number of implemented recommendations has increased to (8) recommendations, the number of non-implemented recommendations has decreased to (22) recommendations, and the number of recommendations under implementation has reached (7) recommendations. The implementation rate increases to (31.1%).

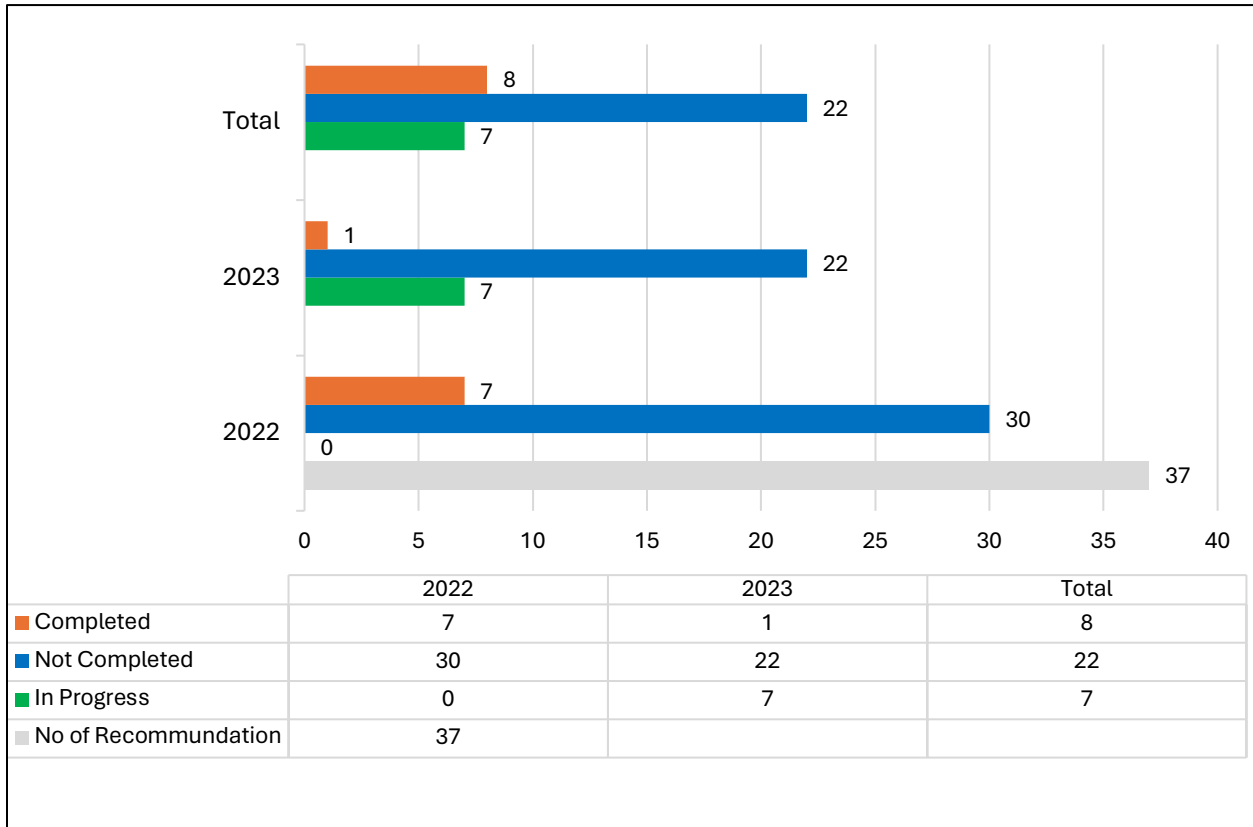


Figure 83: Implementation of Recommendations Related to the Kurdistan Parliament

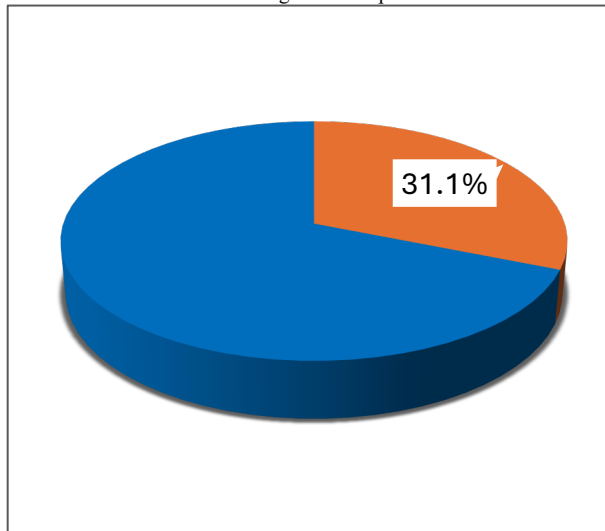


Figure-84 Rates of recommendation execution for 2022-2023

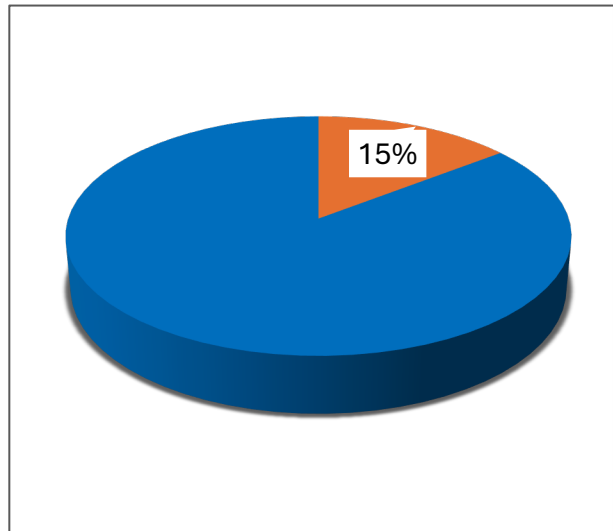


Figure-85 Effort rate of the ministry to completed the recommendation

Implemented Recommendations

1. Enactment of the Anti-Human Trafficking Legislation.
2. Introduction of the Regulatory Framework for Health Insurance.
3. Propose the introduction of a new legislative measure or the revision of existing labor statutes to mandate both domestic and international enterprises and agencies to allocate a designated portion of their resources for the employment of citizens under the jurisdiction of the Kurdistan Regional Government.
4. Consider revising or nullifying Article 41(1) of the Penal Code, which presently lacks provisions criminalizing acts of violence against women and minors.
5. Present suggestions for the amendment of criminal justice statutes in accordance with internationally recognized human rights norms, encompassing respect for individual liberty and security, prohibition of coercive measures during interrogation, disclosure of charges to the accused, transparency in legal proceedings, presumption of innocence until proven guilty, provision of interpretation services, preservation of the right to self-defense, and avenues for appealing convictions.
6. Expedite efforts towards aligning personal status laws with global benchmarks, notably including the principles outlined in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
7. Revoke all legal provisions within the Iraqi Penal Code, Personal Status laws, and associated statutes that perpetuate discriminatory practices against individuals with disabilities, with a particular focus on women and marginalized communities.
8. Undertake revisions to the Legislation pertaining to the Rights and Entitlements of Individuals with Disabilities (Law No. 22 of 2011) in the Kurdistan Region, ensuring conformity with the standards set forth in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, while concurrently reinforcing penalties for instances of exploitation.

Unmet Recommendations

1. Propose legislation to integrate enforced disappearance into national statutes and formally acknowledge it as an autonomous offense under Article 2 of the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.
2. Develop and present the Knowledge of Truth Bill for Victims of Disappearance.
3. Draft and submit the National Board of Missing Persons Bill.
4. Enact legislation to address the threat of cyber terrorism.
5. Regarding orphans, particularly children of ISIS, propose legislation that places the child under the care of the maternal family.
6. Emphasize the importance of activating the Food Health Law and the Food Quality Protection Council.
7. Formulate legislation to ensure the availability of medicines, thereby guaranteeing access for all citizens in hospitals and health facilities.

8. Draft a bill to facilitate the provision of low-interest loans to rural women, thereby bolstering support for the agricultural sector.
9. Propose legislation that mandates a quota for women in government-implemented agricultural projects within rural areas.
10. Introduce legislation concerning loans from the Agricultural Bank and mandate equitable distribution to women in rural communities.
11. Revise penal provisions to address prolonged pre-trial detention while safeguarding the legal rights of the accused during detention.
12. Amend Article 175 of the Iraqi Penal Code to safeguard the right of every accused individual to directly engage with witnesses or through legal representation.
13. Revoke any legal provisions within the Personal Status Law, the Penal Code, and the Principles of Criminal Justice Law that discriminate against individuals with disabilities, particularly women, and those from various ethnic, religious, or linguistic backgrounds, in alignment with international treaties ratified by Iraq, including recommendations directed towards the Kurdistan Region.
14. Amend the Human Organ Donation and Transplantation Law No. 1 of 2018.
15. Repeal Article 380 of the Iraqi Penal Code No. 111 of 1969, which penalizes any individual who incites family members to commit immoral acts.
16. Propose legislation to suspend the implementation of Article 398 (marriage of the victim to the rapist) of the Penal Code, with the ultimate aim of complete repeal alongside Articles (427 and 409) concerning the victim.
17. Revoke paragraphs 1 and 2 of Article 8 of the Personal Status Law No. 188 of 1959, and establish penalties for those coercing women and girls into early marriages, aligning with the Law against Domestic Violence No. 8 of 2011 and Articles -14-29 of the Iraqi Constitution.
18. Amend Article 7 of the Personal Status Law relating to early marriage.
19. Review Article 105 (confinement of convicted individuals in hospitals or healthcare units for six months, along with periodic court reports in cases of mental illness), amend Article 495 of the Penal Code, and ensure equitable treatment for individuals with mental illness, refraining from likening them to animals.
20. Amend and revise inheritance traditions for individuals with disabilities as outlined in paragraph 2 of Article (46) and Article 104 of the Civil Code No. 40 of 1951, while suspending the application of Articles (94, 95, 107, and 108) of the Iraqi Civil Code and Article 7 of the Personal Status Act to eliminate discrimination against people with disabilities.
21. Amend the Counter-Terrorism Law No. 3 of 2006 in accordance with legislative guidelines outlined in the international legal system pertaining to counter-terrorism, as adopted by Arab states on 22/4/1998.
22. Amend the Prosecutor's Law to bring it into alignment with prevailing international legal standards.

Recommendations Under Consideration for Implementation:

1. Align the Torture Bill with the principles outlined in the 1987 International Convention against Torture, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.
2. Propose a new legislative measure addressing the needs of survivors of ISIS atrocities, encompassing the rights of all affected communities and addressing compensation, in accordance with either Law No. 8 of 2021 of the Federal Government or its potential ratification by the Kurdistan Parliament.
3. Draft a new bill to establish a specialized criminal tribunal tasked with adjudicating cases involving ISIS members and their collaborators.
4. Introduce legislation to provide redress and compensation for all individuals impacted by crimes perpetrated by ISIS, ensuring compliance with international norms and the Iraqi constitutional framework.
5. Enact the Rape and Sexual Assault Bill.
6. Extend support for the development of a draft proposal aimed at amending the Kurdistan Domestic Violence Law No. 8 of 2011, currently under parliamentary deliberation.
7. Implement dedicated legislation to address poverty alleviation efforts.

Below are the measures, laws, guidelines, procedures, and practical steps taken in implementing the international recommendations:

The legislation under consideration within the Kurdistan Parliament pertains to various critical matters.

- The issue of rape and sexual assault is addressed through the Law on Combating Violence against Women and Family No. 8. Currently, this law is undergoing an amendment process. During the session held on 21-9-2022, the Kurdistan Parliament conducted the second reading of the proposed amendments to the law. Presently, efforts are directed towards compiling a comprehensive report on these amendments.
- Pertaining to the mandatory allocation of employment opportunities for citizens of the Kurdistan Regional Government within international companies and organizations, the Kurdistan Parliament has enacted measures through two distinct pieces of legislation. These include the Security Companies Law No. (18) of 2021 and the Agriculture Law No. 9 of 2022.

About the laws and projects that are considered important and necessary

- Human Trafficking Bill: The Kurdistan Parliament has implemented the Iraqi Law on the Elimination of Human Trafficking No. 28 of 2012, reinforced by Law No. 6 of 2018, currently in effect.
- Regarding legislation concerning disappearances and associated matters, including establishing truth for victims' relatives and forming a national committee for the disappeared, significant legal clarifications and organization have been achieved. These

efforts stem from the campaign against the mass extermination of the Iraqi Kurdistan people, outlined in Law No. (3) of 1999 and its subsequent amendment by Law No. (17) of 2021 (published in the official newspaper Waqi'i Kurdistan No. 277).

- Legal provisions for ISIS survivors and their entitlement to compensation have been addressed in accordance with Article (132) of the Iraqi Constitution. The Kurdistan Parliament, through Decision No. 11 of 2019, reiterated the federal government's duty to fulfill its constitutional obligations and responsibilities.
- Deliberations within the Kurdistan Parliament have extensively explored the establishment of a specialized court to prosecute ISIS leaders for their crimes. Engaging with various stakeholders, including representatives from Security Council member states, the UNITAD team, experts, and judicial bodies, rigorous discussions took place. However, the project faced rejection by the Federal Court through Decision No. (71) on 13/6/2021, citing lack of expertise and constitutional concerns. Subsequently, the Kurdistan Parliament, through written communication number (4/3/3818) dated 24/11/2021, urged the Council of Ministers to pursue alternative measures. Regrettably, this request remains unanswered.
- With respect to compensating victims of wartime acts and military errors, the Federal Government has addressed this matter through the enactment of Law No. (75) of 2015. In the Kurdistan Region, three legislative proposals have been put forth for the same objective. However, in accordance with Point (2) of Article (79) of the Rules of Procedure of the Kurdistan Parliament, owing to their financial implications, these proposals were referred to the Council of Ministers. Regrettably, the Council of Ministers declined these propositions in their correspondences numbered (7762) dated 24/11/2020 and (5500) dated 5/2021.
- The regulation of asylum falls within the exclusive purview of the Federal Government as delineated in Article 110 of the Constitution. Therefore, the Kurdistan Regional Government lacks the authority to independently regulate this matter.
- Two bills concerning health insurance have been introduced, yet, in compliance with Point (2) of Article (79) of the Rules of Procedure of the Kurdistan Parliament, given their financial nature, they were forwarded to the Council of Ministers for consideration. Regrettably, the Council of Ministers rejected these legislations in their letter numbered (2307) dated 23/2/2021.
- No legislative proposal has been submitted to the parliament regarding agricultural loans. However, two bills pertaining to agricultural insurance have been presented, and in line with Point (2) of Article (2) of the Rules of Procedure of the Kurdistan Parliament, due to their financial implications, they were referred to the Council of Ministers for approval. Unfortunately, the Council of Ministers declined both bills in their communications numbered (4624) dated 12/8/2020 and (7818) dated 30/6/2021.
- A bill addressing financial assistance for the impoverished was submitted, yet it was declined by the Council of Ministers in their communication numbered (13167) dated 12/9/2022 due to its financial ramifications.
- Concerning the Labor Law, a bill has been presented. The Kurdistan Parliament has undertaken several sessions on this matter, including the initial reading, and has tasked specialized committees with compiling a report for the subsequent reading. Additionally, it

organized a four-day workshop, in collaboration with the International Labor Organization (ILO) in Duhok, under the auspices of the Speaker of Parliament.

- Regarding the requirement for international companies and organizations to allocate a specific quota for employing citizens of the Kurdistan Regional Government, the Kurdistan Parliament has addressed this through two legislative acts: the Security Companies Law No. (18) of 2021 and Agriculture Law No. (9) of 2022.

Regarding the legislation deemed pertinent for amendment

- Two legislative proposals have been presented to amend the statute concerning the prosecutor generalship in the Kurdistan Region. However, these proposals encountered opposition from both the Presidency of the Judicial Council and the Council of Ministers, as indicated in the communication issued by the Judicial Council (No. 1/3/21) dated 6/1/2020.
- In the context of amending the Citizenship Law, it is imperative to acknowledge that pursuant to Article 110 of the Constitution, this prerogative lies exclusively within the jurisdiction of the federal government. Consequently, any amendment to this law falls beyond the authority of the Kurdistan Region.
- The proposal for revoking paragraph (1) of Article (41) and Article (380) of the Iraqi Penal Code No. (111) of 1969 has been recognized as necessitating a legislative response within the scope of Law No. (8). This proposed amendment aims to provide a more delineated interpretation, thereby refining the overarching provisions of the Penal Code.
- Similarly, a legislative initiative seeking amendments to the Counter-Terrorism Law No. 3 of 2006 was introduced, yet it faced dissent from the Legal Committee of Parliament.
- Regarding the reform of the legislation concerning the rights and entitlements of individuals with disabilities, under Law No. (22) of 2011, a preliminary draft was submitted. Subsequently, the Kurdistan Parliament enacted amendments to the said law through Law No. (8) of 2021, reflecting a commitment to advancing the legal protection and empowerment of this demographic segment.

Several additional legislations have been enacted to safeguard human rights and enact international directives.

- With respect to the Mine Law, the proposal has been declined by the Council of Ministers citing its scale and fiscal implications. As per correspondence numbered (7764) dated 24/11/2020, however, the Kurdistan Parliament has communicated with the Council of Ministers, urging the formulation of a project to govern mines and personnel engaged in this sector. Nonetheless, a response is still pending.

Laws passed in the Kurdistan Parliament in 2020-2023 related to the implementation of the Regional Human Rights Plan:

- In 2020 (1) law was passed.
- In 2021 (9) laws were passed.
- 2022 (10) laws passed.

- In 2023 (2) laws were passed.
- (8) The law is in the process of being implemented for legislation.
- (14) Applicable laws issued in earlier years.

The Year 2020

1. The legislation pertaining to drugs and psychotropic substances in the Kurdistan Region, known as Law No. (1) of 2020, was promulgated, accompanied by the establishment of a distinguished committee tasked with the eradication of such substances.

The Year 2021

1. The enactment of the Domestic Products Protection Law, denoted as Law No. (3) of 2021
2. Law on Protection of Water and Sewerage Projects and Networks, referenced as Law No. (3) of 2021, signifies a crucial step towards safeguarding essential infrastructural assets.
3. The enactment of Law No. (5) of 2021 concerning the Management and Protection of Archaeological Sites in the Kurdistan Region is pivotal given the rich historical heritage, comprising over 8,000 archaeological sites. This legislation is specifically designed to facilitate the identification, exploration, and preservation efforts pertaining to archaeological sites within the Kurdistan Region.
4. The inaugural amendment to Law No. (8) of 2021, pertaining to the Rights and Privileges of Disabled Persons in the Kurdistan Region, underscores a commitment to enhancing inclusivity and support for the disabled community.
5. Law No. (10) of 2021, concerning the Implementation and Amendment of the Iraqi Private and Mixed Sector Industrial Investment Law No. (20) of 1998, as amended, is indicative of the region's dedication to fostering a conducive environment for industrial growth and development.
6. The issuance of Law No. (11) of 2021, representing the Second Amendment to Law No. (3) of 2011 on the Kurdistan Regional Prosecutor's Office, highlights ongoing efforts to refine legal frameworks for efficient governance and administration.
7. The amendment to the Missing Persons Law, denoted as Law No. 17 of 2021, is a poignant acknowledgment of historical injustices, particularly during periods marked by mass atrocities against the Kurdish populace in Iraq.
8. The enactment of the Law on Misuse of Communication Devices, embodied in Law No. 6 of 2008 within the Kurdistan Region, reflects a proactive stance towards regulating communication infrastructures. To ensure compliance, detailed directives have been issued to govern the sale of SIM cards, as published in the Kurdistan Gazette No. (272) on 12/10/2021.

The Year 2022

1. Legislation pertaining to Arms Regulation (Law No. (2) of 2022.
2. The Water Management and Protection Law (Law No. (4) of 2022 in the Kurdistan Region.
3. Educational Programs: Legislation regarding the establishment of the Board of Accreditation of Education and Higher Education Institutions and Programs (Law No. (6) of 2022 in the Kurdistan Region.
4. Legislation addressing Contraband Goods and the seizure thereof (Law No. (8) of 2022 in the Kurdistan Region.
5. Legislation concerning Tourism (Law No. (9) of 2022 in the Kurdistan Region.
6. Reform measures, including instructions issued by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs Instruction No. (9) of 2022, along with amendments to the guidelines for employees of the executive force of the General Directorate of Social Reform Instruction No. (5) of 2021.
7. Amendments to the Implementation of the Juvenile Care Law (Law No. (5) of 2022), modifying the provisions of the law initially established in 1983, in the Kurdistan Region.
8. The First Amendment to the Law on Environmental Protection and Improvement Law No. (11) of 2022 in the Kurdistan Region.
9. Legislation addressing Education Law No. (13) of 2022 in the Kurdistan Region.
10. Legal Institutions: The issuance of the first amendment to the law governing the Kurdistan Regional Council of Iraq Law No. (17) of 2022.

The Year 2023

1. Progress on the Labor Law, with the second reading taking place on March 1, 2023, in the Kurdistan Parliament.
2. Approval by the Council of Ministers on April 12, 2023, of the Child Protection Policy in the Kurdistan Region, encompassing a range of programs and measures designed to safeguard children from violence, abuse, and neglect, in accordance with international agreements and recommendations.

The legislative landscape in the Kurdistan Region, as established in preceding years, aligns with international norms and standards as follows:

1. Capital Punishment Legislation: Pursuant to Law 21 of 2003, the provisions concerning offenses punishable by death outlined in articles 156-228 of the Iraqi Penal Code have been suspended. Additionally, Article 287 of the Principles of Criminal Procedure Code, pertaining to the death penalty for pregnant or nursing women, is not applicable for a period of two years following childbirth as per agreement.
2. Right to Information: The enactment of Right to Information Law No. 11 of 2013 in the Kurdistan Region serves to regulate the dissemination of accurate information, fostering an environment conducive to freedom of expression.

3. Regulation of Demonstrations: Enacted in 2010, Law No. 11 on the Regulation of Demonstrations in the Kurdistan Region aims to facilitate peaceful and orderly expression of citizens' opinions and lawful demands, thereby safeguarding public interests while adhering to international principles and standards regarding rights and liberties.
4. Journalism Safeguarding Legislation: Law No. 35 of 2007 was introduced to safeguard the rights of journalists.
5. Press Regulation: The Kurdistan Region Press Law, designated as No. 10 of 1993, was established.
6. Community Protection Legislation: Law No. 5 of 2015 in the Kurdistan Region was promulgated to ensure the preservation and protection of the political, civil, social, cultural, and economic rights of communities in accordance with both domestic and international legal frameworks.
7. Rights of Ethnicities, Religions, and Sects: In 2003, the Kurdistan Regional Government enacted the Bill on the Rights of Ethnicities, Religions, and Religious Sects in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, which stands as a significant instrument for safeguarding the rights of communities across all dimensions.
8. Combatting Human Trafficking: Law No. 6 of 2018 was introduced to enforce the provisions of Law No. 28 of 2012 concerning the Elimination of Human Trafficking, as issued by the Iraqi Parliament.
9. Legislation against Domestic Violence: Aimed at shielding women from violence within the Kurdistan Region, Law No. 8 of 2011 addressing Domestic Violence is presently in effect. Efforts are currently underway to refine this legislation to better suit contemporary needs, with a draft bill submitted to the Kurdistan Parliament for deliberation and voting on proposed amendments.
10. Honor Crimes: Stipulated within the General Amnesty Law in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region, No. 4 of 2007, honor crimes remain excluded from the scope of general amnesty.
11. Gender Discrimination: Provisions such as Article 377 within the Penal Code have been nullified.
12. Prohibition of Forced Marriage: Through Law No. 15 of 2008, the Kurdistan Parliament has revoked both paragraphs 1-2 of Article 9 and Article 6 of the Iraqi Penal Code No. 111 of 1969, as amended.
13. Legal Abortion in Cases Endangering Maternal Life: While abortion lacks a legal foundation due to prohibition under the Iraqi Penal Code and the fatwa of the Regional Fatwa Council, in cases where pregnancy poses a threat to the mother's life, a scientific committee comprising diverse experts within the Ministry of Health's general directorates determines the appropriate course of action, whether to proceed with the pregnancy or opt for abortion.

The following laws are in the process of being legislated and are related to the implementation of the Regional Action Plan for Human Rights:

1. **Legislation on Torture Prevention:** On March 1, 2023, the Kurdistan Parliament initiated the first reading of a bill aimed at combating torture and ill-treatment, seeking to establish a clear legal framework within national law to define and address the crime of torture.
2. **Bill on Correctional Oversight:** The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs has drafted legislation concerning correctional oversight in the Kurdistan Region and has forwarded it to the Council for consideration.
3. **Revision of Medical Professional Ethical Standards:** Efforts are underway to revise the Law on Medical Professional Ethical Conduct in the Kurdistan Region, updating guidelines set forth in 1985.
4. **Enhanced Funding for Disability Support:** Funding allocations for individuals with disabilities will be determined based on a thorough assessment by a specialized medical panel, according to criteria outlined by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs.
5. **Prevention of Discrimination:** The Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs has formulated legislation to address discriminatory practices based on religion or belief, aiming to establish appropriate penalties.
6. **Healthcare Coverage Initiative:** The Ministry of Health has formulated a draft health insurance law for the region, which has been submitted to the Council (Shora) for review and potential enactment.
7. **Legislation on International Offenses:** The National Committee on International Humanitarian Law, in conjunction with the Federal Supreme Court and the United Nations Team to Investigate Crimes against ISIS (UNITAD), has developed a draft law targeting international offenses. After extensive consultations, the draft legislation is currently under review by the State Council.
8. **Child Protection Legislation:** The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs has presented the Child Protection Bill to the Council of Ministers, comprising 82 articles aimed at establishing a council tasked with devising strategies, plans, and policies for child protection.

List of laws and decisions rejected by the relevant parties or standing committees of the parliament:

Table 66 Proposed Rules

No	Name of proposed rule	Notice
1	Humanization in the Kurdistan Region	In 2019, the parliament submitted it to the government and in 2019 it was rejected by the Ministry of Education
2	Family development in the region	In 2019, parliament submitted it to the government and in 2021 it was rejected by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs
3	social care and assistance	In 2019, parliament submitted it to the government and in 2021 it was rejected due to the financial burden

4	Social insurance for orphans in the region	In 2019, parliament submitted it to the government and in 2021 it was rejected by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs
5	Financial and social support for older women in the region	In 2019, parliament submitted it to the government and in 2021 it was rejected due to the financial burden
6	Protection of teachers and educational guides and the bill to protect primary and secondary teachers and education supervisors in the region	It was rejected by the parliamentary legal committee in 2019, and the Ministry of Education in
7	Law on Establishment of Housing Financial Support Fund to provide housing units for low-income citizens in the Kurdistan Region	In 2019, parliament submitted it to the government and in 2020 it was rejected because there is no legal gap, and the Housing Provision Law for Residents No. 7 of 2008, as amended, is in force.
8	Agricultural Insurance Act	In 2019, parliament submitted it to the Council of Ministers and in 2021 it was rejected at the request of the Ministry of Agriculture due to the financial crisis
9	Real Estate Advance (Real estate advance) and the decision to grant professional real estate and marriage to citizens of the Kurdistan Region	In 2019, parliament submitted it to the government and in 2020 it was rejected at the request of the Ministry of Finance
10	Providing private loans for bachelor's degree in the Kurdistan Region	In 2019, parliament submitted it to the Council of Ministers and in 2020 it was rejected
11	Law of the Prosecutor General in the Kurdistan Region	In 2019, parliament submitted it to the Council of Ministers and in 2021 it was rejected by the Ministry of Justice and the Judicial Council
12	Employment of contract employees	In 2019, parliament submitted it to the Council of Ministers and in 2021 it was rejected because employment is within the power of the government without a specific law
13	Health insurance	In 2019, parliament submitted it to the government and in 2021 it was rejected due to the financial burden
14	Providing tuition allowances to students in the Kurdistan Region	In 2019, parliament submitted it to the government and in 2021 it was rejected due to lack of legal gaps
15	Recruitment of first graduates	In 2019, parliament submitted it to the Council of Ministers and in 2021 it was rejected because employment is within the power of the government without a specific law
16	Rehabilitation of dilapidated factories in the Kurdistan Region	In 2019, parliament submitted it to the government and in 2021 it was rejected due to lack of legal gaps
17	Unjust gains	It was rejected by the Legal Committee of the Parliament in 2020 because there is no legal gap and this issue is devoted to Articles 14 to 20 of the Corruption Commission Law.
18	Amendment of the Tax and Income Act	It was rejected by the parliamentary legal committee in 2020 because there is no legal vacuum

19	Develop cultural activities of communities	It was rejected by the parliamentary legal committee in 2020 because there is no legal vacuum
20	Re-establishment of the armed forces in the Kurdistan Region	In 2020, parliament submitted it to the Council of Ministers and it was rejected in 2020 because the Reform Law No. 2 of 2020 addressed this issue
21	The National Park	In 2020, parliament submitted it to the Council of Ministers and in 2020 it was rejected
22	Compensation for victims of international crimes	In 2020, parliament submitted it to the Council of Ministers and in 2020 it was rejected
23	Martyrs, disabled and retired contract employees of mine affairs	In 2020, parliament submitted it to the Council of Ministers and in 2020 it was rejected
24	Establishment of a genetic diseases counseling center	In 2020, parliament submitted it to the Council of Ministers and in 2020 it was rejected
25	Electricity generation through renewable energy	In 2020, parliament submitted it to the Council of Ministers and in 2020 it was rejected by the Ministry of Electricity
26	Combating prostitution in the Kurdistan Region	It was rejected by the parliamentary legal committee in 2020 because there is no legal vacuum
27	First Amendment to the Investment Law in the Kurdistan Region No. (4) of 2006	In 2020, parliament submitted it to the government and in 2021 it was rejected because it is being worked on by the government and will be submitted to parliament when completed
28	Service and retirement of the internal security forces in the Kurdistan Region	In 2020, parliament submitted it to the government and in 2021 it was rejected. They said the government would prepare a special bill and submit it to parliament
29	Universal social security in the Kurdistan Region	In 2021, the parliament submitted it to the government and in 2021 it was rejected because it prepared the pension and social security bill in the Kurdistan Region and the government security bill and will be sent to parliament after approval
30	Kurdistan Company for Agricultural Insurance in the Kurdistan Region	In 2021, parliament submitted it to the Council of Ministers and in 2021 it was rejected
31	Preventing international crimes and bringing justice to victims	In 2021, parliament submitted it to the Council of Ministers and in 2021 it was rejected
32	Compensation for the victims of the actions of the former Iraqi regime that caused their disability	In 2021, parliament submitted it to the Council of Ministers and in 2021 it was rejected
33	Return of salary arrears of Kurdistan Regional Government employees	In 2021, parliament submitted it to the Council of Ministers and in 2021 it was rejected by the Ministry of Finance
34	Consolidating the financial entitlements of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) salaried employees	In 2021, parliament submitted it to the Council of Ministers and in 2021 it was rejected by the Ministry of Finance
35	Creating bank accounts for salaried employees and refunding salary arrears	In 2021, parliament submitted it to the Council of Ministers and in 2021 it was rejected by the Ministry of Finance

36	First Amendment to the Law on Private Universities in the Kurdistan Region	In 2021, parliament submitted it to the government and in 2021 it was rejected by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research because they do not consider it necessary
37	Traffic Law in the Kurdistan Region	In 2021, parliament submitted it to the government and in 2021 it was rejected
38	Decision to regulate beekeeping in the Kurdistan Region	In 2021, parliament submitted it to the government and in 2021 it was rejected
39	Amendment to the Law on the Corruption Commission in the Kurdistan Region	In 2021, the parliament submitted it to the Corruption Commission for revision at the request of the parliamentary corruption committee
40	Law on the General Directorate of Investment of Endowed Property in the Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs	In 2021, parliament submitted it to the government and in 2021 it was rejected by the Ministry of Endowments and Religious Affairs
41	Missing children in mass migration in the Kurdistan Region	In 2021, parliament submitted it to the government and in 2021 it was rejected due to lack of legal gaps
42	Missing children in the Kurdistan Region	In 2021, parliament submitted it to the government and in 2021 it was rejected due to lack of legal gaps
43	- Eradication of corruption and its forms in the Kurdistan Region	In 2021, the parliament submitted it to the Council of Ministers and it was rejected in 2021 because the reform law No. (2) of 2020 is in process
44	Amendment to the Law on Endowments and Religious Affairs	The Legal Affairs Committee in parliament in 2021 was rejected because the implementation amendments are only for federal laws and the laws of the region will be amended directly.
45	Union of Agricultural Journalists	In 2021, it was rejected by the Legal Committee of Parliament because there is no legal vacuum
46	Protection of children's rights in the Kurdistan Region	In 2021, parliament submitted it to the government and in 2021 it was rejected due to lack of legal gaps
47	Rights and Privileges of Legal Employees in the Kurdistan Region	In 2021, parliament submitted it to the government and in 2021 it was rejected
48	Alternative punishments for offenders in the Kurdistan Region	In 2021, parliament submitted it to the government and in 2022 it was rejected
49	Decision to oblige national and foreign companies to work in the Kurdistan Region	In 2021, parliament submitted it to the government and in 2022 it was rejected
50	Criminal Court for ISIS Crimes in the Kurdistan Region	In 2021, the government was directed to find out what the parliament thinks about the bill and the legislative process after the Federal Court decision No. (71 on 13/6/2021) on the unconstitutionality of the bill.
51	Government compliance with financial obligations	In 2021, it was rejected by the Legal Committee of Parliament because there is no legal vacuum
52	Rehabilitation of prisoners in the Kurdistan Region	In 2021, parliament submitted it to the government and in 2021 it was rejected by the Ministry of Justice

53	Recognition of the Beard Massacre	In 2021, parliament submitted it to the government and it was rejected for restructuring.
54	Provide housing units for the Peshmerga in the Kurdistan Region	In 2021, the parliament submitted the request to the government and it was rejected because this issue does not require legislation, and it is the power of the Council of Ministers to make this decision in the light of applicable laws.
55	Voluntary Labor Act	In 2022, the parliament submitted the proposal to the government and rejected it because of the financial burden on the government.
56	Support and respect health and medical workers	In 2022, it was rejected by the Legal Committee of Parliament because there is no legal vacuum
57	Genocide Writers Union in the Kurdistan Region	In 2022, it was rejected by the Legal Committee of Parliament because there is no legal vacuum
58	Equal educational opportunities for children with disabilities	In 2022, it was rejected by the Legal Committee of Parliament because there is no legal vacuum
59	Chamchamal is the capital of Kurdistan's martyrs and Anfal victims	In 2022, the parliament submitted it to the government and it was rejected by the Ministry of Martyrs and Anfal Affairs
60	Rights and privileges of chemical weapons victims in the Kurdistan Region	In 2022, the parliament submitted it to the government and it was rejected by the Ministry of Martyrs and Anfal Affairs
61	Quality Assurance Control Agency in the Kurdistan Region	In 2022, the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) has prepared a bill (Food and Drug Agency in the Kurdistan Region) and the legal procedures have been completed and will be submitted to the Kurdistan Parliament soon.
62	Kurdistan Regional Artists Pension Fund	In 2022, parliament submitted it to the government and it was rejected because of the financial burden
63	Limiting the import and production of plastics in the Kurdistan Region	In 2022, parliament submitted it to the government and it was rejected because this issue does not require an independent law, and in the light of the applicable laws can issue the necessary guidelines.
64	Financial assistance to the poor in the Kurdistan Region	In 2022, parliament submitted it to the government and it was rejected because of the financial burden
65	Kurdistan Radiation Protection Agency in the Kurdistan Region	In 2022, the parliament submitted it to the government and was rejected by the Ministry of Health and the Environmental Protection and Rehabilitation Board because there is no legal gap, and an independent law is not necessary and can issue necessary guidelines in the light of applicable laws.
66	National Defense in the Kurdistan Region	In 2022, the parliament submitted the request to the government and was rejected by the Ministry of Interior.

Necessary measures to implement the recommendations of the Kurdistan Parliament

Following a succession of workshops and roundtable discussions, the Office of the Coordinator for International Advocacy has devised precise measures. These measures have been forwarded by the Office of the Prime Minister to pertinent stakeholders, including the Kurdistan Parliament.

Committed to eradicating domestic violence

- There is an immediate need to revise the Domestic Violence Prevention Law No. 8 of 2011 within the Kurdistan Parliament, particularly concerning individuals who conceal evidence during investigations or trials. Legal ramifications should be imposed on any party impeding justice in cases involving domestic violence.

Committed to eradicating torture and ill-treatment

- It is imperative to enact legislation or establish a legal definition within domestic law pertaining to the crime of torture, prohibiting all forms of corporal punishment in alignment with relevant conventions against torture and enforced disappearance.

Committed to safeguarding the right to freedom of expression and access to information

- Amendments to the Journalism Law No. 35 of 2007 are warranted to strike a harmonious balance between international benchmarks and local exigencies, particularly in the era dominated by social media and digital platforms.
- The Access to Information Act should undergo revisions to enhance transparency in terms of the information provision mechanism, particularly amidst the burgeoning landscape of audiovisual media, including social networks.

Specialized in correctional facilities and detention center management

- Enactment of the Reform and Rehabilitation of Prisoners and Detainees Law in the Kurdistan Region, formulated by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, aimed at regulating reforms and safeguarding the rights of detainees and convicts.
- Implementation of the Alternative Punishments Law, also developed by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, as a measure to alleviate prison overcrowding. This entails a comprehensive assessment of the offender's profile through medical, psychological, and social lenses, ensuring that individuals with no prior criminal record are eligible.

Committed to human organ donation and transplantation

- Vigilant oversight of the law's implementation process is imperative, with particular attention to Article 11, which remains unapplied, concerning the compilation of a donor-recipient registry.
- Adherence to Article 26 of the law, mandating the establishment of an organ storage bank linked with international counterparts, is essential to mitigate coercion and surgical threats.

Committed to combating human trafficking

- Amendments to the Law on the Elimination of Human Trafficking No. 6 of 2018 are warranted, with a focus on refining the law's scope to encompass the crime of human trafficking comprehensively. Provisions concerning penalties, specifically pertaining to Articles 5 and 6, should include provisions addressing the abduction of refugees.

Committed to preventing discrimination and hate speech

- Introduction of legislation addressing the elimination of discrimination and hate speech, coupled with punitive measures, is imperative. The existing Law on Protection of Communities Rights No. 5 of 2015 lacks punitive provisions.
- Formulation of a bill pertaining to media regulation, encompassing electronic media, is essential.
- Designation of Coexistence Day in the Kurdistan Region is recommended to promote inclusivity and harmony.

Focused on drugs and psychotropic substances

- Amendment of the Law on Combating Drugs and Psychotropic Substances No. 1 of 2020, particularly concerning penalties for drug trafficking, necessitates a review to ensure alignment with prevailing laws in the Kurdistan Region.
- Differentiated penalties for drug use and trafficking are essential.
- Proposal for legislation facilitating the referral of seized drugs to relevant authorities should be considered.

Advocating for the rights of the disabled and people with disabilities

- Revision of the Mental Health Law No. 8 of 2013 is essential.
- Review of the psychosocial supervision system for individuals with disabilities outlined in Article 46, paragraph 2, and Article 104 of the Civil Code No. 4 of 1951 is necessary. Additionally, non-recognition of Articles 94, 95, 107, and 108 of the Civil Code 188 of 1959 concerning the eligibility of individuals with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities is recommended.
- Inclusion of representatives from the disabled and people with disabilities in decision-making processes and proposals is paramount.

The Judicial Council

Out of the (38) recommendations submitted to the Judicial Council in 2022, (17) recommendations have been implemented, (13) recommendations have not been implemented and (8) recommendations were in the process of implementation. Compared to 2023, the number of implemented recommendations increased to (21) recommendations, the number of non-implemented recommendations decreased to (8) recommendations, and the number of recommendations under implementation reached (9) recommendations. In this regard the implementation rate becomes (76.1%)

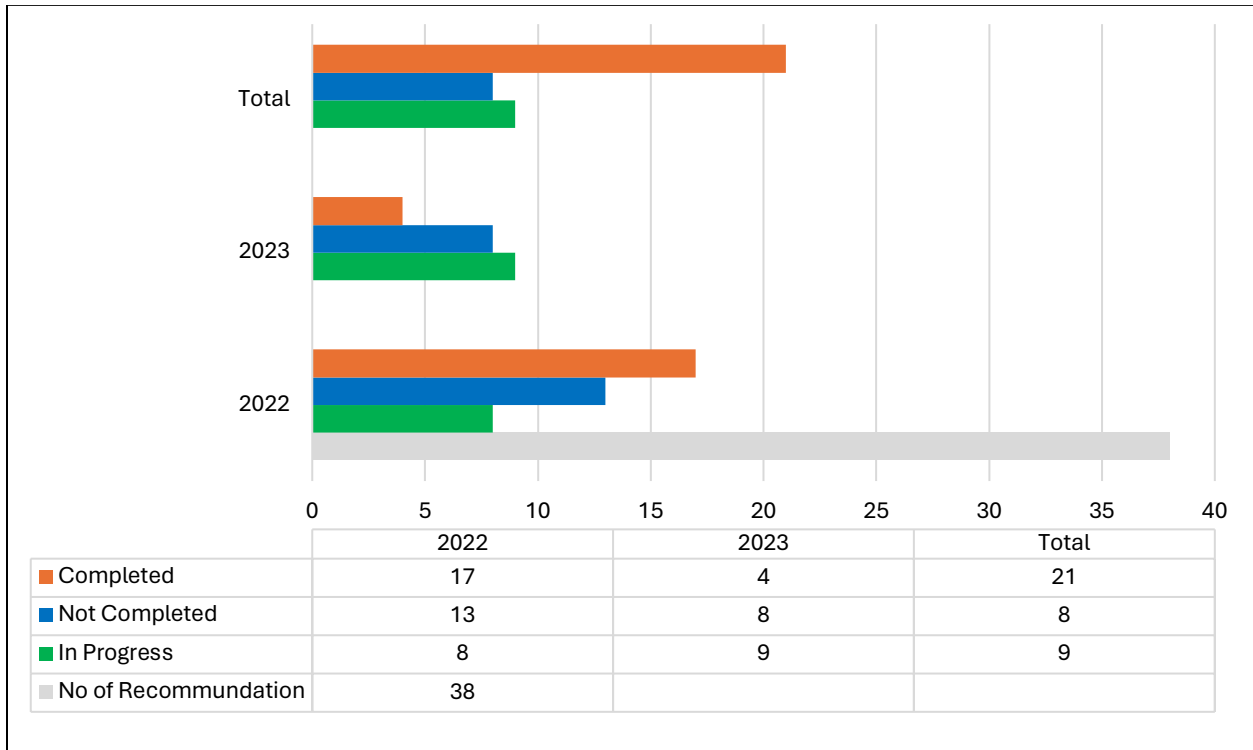


Figure 86: Implementation of Recommendations Related to the Judicial Council

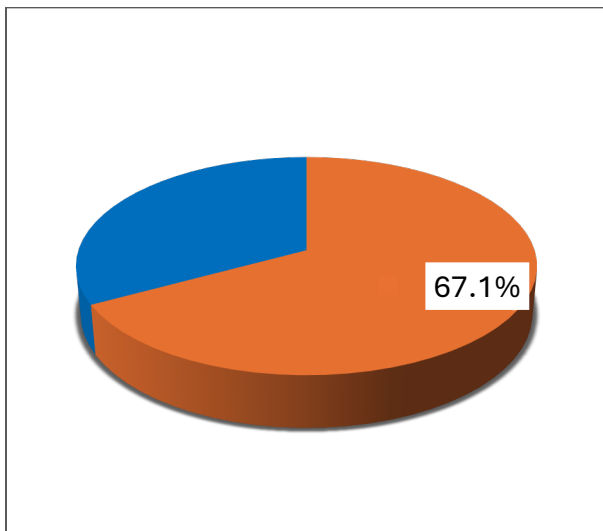


Figure-87 Rates of recommendation execution for 2022-2023

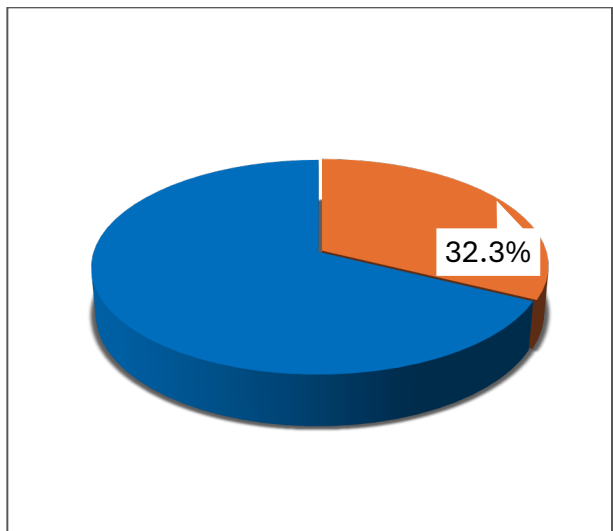


Figure-88 Effort rate of the ministry to completed the recommendations

Implemented Recommendations

1. Reserve the imposition of the death penalty solely for the gravest offenses.
2. Enact legislation to prevent and eliminate harmful practices against women and girls, particularly early marriage and female genital mutilation.
3. Undertake immediate, thorough, and impartial investigations into instances of violations of the right to life and physical integrity that occurred under the governance of armed extremist groups in specific regions of the Member State. Expedite their referral to judicial proceedings, provide compensation to victims, and ensure equitable justice.
4. Prosecute the accused and ensure justice for victims.
5. Conduct thorough and independent inquiries into allegations of crimes against humanity, war crimes, and genocide.
6. Hold members of ISIS accountable for their actions.
7. Acknowledge enforced disappearance as a distinct offense in national legislation, aligning with the definition outlined in Article 2 of the Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. This definition encompasses acts such as arbitrary arrest, detention, or abduction, which, when committed by non-state actors, constitute enforced disappearance.
8. Penalize individuals misusing telecommunications devices or the internet to threaten or violate the rights of others, endanger national security, or disrupt public order and civility.
9. Initiate legal proceedings against law enforcement and security personnel upon substantiated allegations of detainee torture, ensuring appropriate redress for victims.
10. Conduct swift, thorough, and impartial investigations into all allegations of torture and other forms of maltreatment, including instances of enforced disappearance, through immediate measures.
11. Investigate allegations of torture comprehensively throughout all stages of criminal proceedings, recognizing that torture contravenes individuals' human rights.
12. Ensure the accused receives a fair trial.
13. Expedite the prosecution of ISIS perpetrators for crimes against humanity by methodically gathering evidence and electronic documentation, adhering to principles of international humanitarian law and human rights standards.
14. Intensify efforts to uphold human rights and fundamental freedoms for all communities, and prosecute perpetrators of violations of international humanitarian and human rights law.
15. Prevent occurrences of underage, forced, and temporary marriages.
16. Guarantee the full observance of all safeguards for a fair trial and due process outlined in Article 12 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
17. Safeguard individuals' right to legal procedures as stipulated in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, ensuring access to legal counsel and the opportunity to mount a defense.

18. Define sexual slavery and trafficking for sexual exploitation as distinct offenses independent of kidnapping or unlawful detention.
19. Affirm the equality of persons with disabilities in legal standing with others.
20. Ensure full accountability and take requisite legal measures regarding grave human rights violations.
21. Conduct immediate, thorough, and impartial investigations into all allegations of torture and other forms of maltreatment.

Unmet Recommendations

1. Proposal to suspend the application of Article (398) of the Penal Code concerning the marriage of perpetrators to their victims.
2. Advocate for the adoption and enforcement of legislation that unequivocally prohibits all manifestations of gender-based violence, while revising clauses that offer protection to perpetrators who enter into matrimony with their victims.
3. Consider permitting abortion within the confines of the law in instances where there is documented abuse and jeopardy to the life or well-being of the expectant mother, or in cases of severe fetal abnormalities.
4. Advocate for the judicial pursuit of individuals who perpetrate acts of violence against persons with disabilities.
5. Sustain the ongoing alignment of legislative frameworks with pertinent accords aimed at eradicating instances of enforced disappearances.
6. Persist in endeavors aimed at bolstering the primacy of law and guaranteeing the equitable dispensation of justice through resolute actions against corruption and the deterrence of impunity.
7. Continue endeavors aimed at fortifying the supremacy of law and ensuring the equitable administration of justice by combatting corruption and forestalling acts of impunity.
8. Seek comprehensive resolutions to the predicament of children born to ISIS-affiliated fathers and Yazidi mothers concerning their religious and ethnic identities, while ensuring safeguards for individuals from non-Muslim faiths until they reach legal adulthood.

Recommendations under current implementation:

1. Ensure the conduct of independent, transparent, and impartial inquiries into instances of violence and fatalities against civilians amid ongoing demonstrations.
2. Undertake an autonomous and transparent examination of allegations regarding the disproportionate use of force in dispersing peaceful gatherings, with a view to prosecuting individuals implicated in physical aggression or breaches of human dignity during such dispersals.
3. Employ solely trained security personnel to manage public assemblies and hold these forces accountable for any undue application of force against protestors.

4. Heighten endeavors to safeguard journalists, media personnel, and advocates of human rights.
5. Intensify measures to shield journalists and investigate individuals exploiting journalism for purposes detrimental to national security, ensuring their accountability without evasion of consequences.
6. Deliver training sessions to the judiciary, law enforcement, and border security personnel for identifying victims of trafficking, ensuring their referral to suitable service providers, and upholding all pertinent stipulations of criminal law.
7. Scrutinize criminal statutes to prevent undue delays in trials, thereby averting the establishment of pretrial detention as a norm and ensuring prompt presentation of detainees before a judicial authority as prescribed by law. (Following the enactment of the 2005 Iraqi Constitution, the presentation of detainees is exclusively within the purview of judges, not any personnel authorized by law to engage in judicial functions.)
8. Enact legislation addressing the needs of survivors of crimes perpetrated by ISIS, ensuring alignment with international human rights norms and standards.
9. Enhance the understanding of human rights and international treaties among judges and legal practitioners through participation in training programs, emphasizing the incorporation of treaty provisions into domestic laws and their application in local courts.

Below are the measures, laws, guidelines, procedures, and practical steps taken in implementing the international recommendations:

Temporary suspension of the enforcement of Article (398) of the Penal Code regarding the potential marriage between the perpetrator and the victim.

The inclusion of this particular article by the legislature was aimed at safeguarding the interests of women, emphasizing a customary aspect within society. There exist prevalent traditions wherein the reputation of a woman, once tarnished by the heinous act of rape, faces considerable challenges in her reintegration into societal norms. Regrettably, such circumstances often leave the woman marginalized, with few avenues for redressal, consequently exacerbating social issues for her.

Hence, the legislature mandates a potential marriage between the accused and the victim, contingent upon the woman's consent. However, should the marriage dissolve within a span of less than three years due to the fault of the accused, punitive measures against the perpetrator can be enforced. The essence of this article fundamentally revolves around the protection of the woman's dignity and social standing, aiming to deter future occurrences of such offenses.

Permitting abortion within the confines of the law in instances of physical harm or jeopardy to the well-being of the expectant mother, or in cases of severe fetal deformity.

Concerning the authorization of abortion, it is deemed unlawful pursuant to legal statutes and the tenets of Islamic jurisprudence. Therefore, any amendment to permit abortion is precluded.

Protection of the rights of the accused

In the courts of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), individuals accused of crimes are afforded legal representation in accordance with prevailing international norms. Over the past three years, the Kurdistan Regional Government has earmarked 1.7 billion dinars to facilitate access to legal counsel for defendants.

Efforts to expedite legal proceedings and ensure timely adjudication of cases are squarely within the purview of parliamentary and legal deliberations, particularly in adherence to the tenets outlined in the Principles of Criminal Procedure. Under Article 109, the duration of pre-trial detention is rigorously regulated, with provisions stipulating that the cumulative period of detention should not exceed one-quarter of the duration of the alleged offense. Extension of detention beyond this threshold necessitates explicit authorization from the criminal court, contingent upon the imperative of concluding investigations within a specified timeframe, typically not exceeding six months.

Moreover, legal statutes mandate the prompt presentation of individuals detained under a warrant before a judicial authority for due process. Delays in case resolution, though regrettable, are addressed within the framework of the Principles of Criminal Procedure Law No. 23 of 1971 and the Civil Procedure Law No. 83 of 1969, as amended. These statutes underscore the imperative of concluding legal proceedings within a designated timeframe, typically six months. Challenges leading to delays often stem from logistical constraints, inadequate resources, staffing shortages, and occasional procedural complexities. It's important to note that the majority of cases, ranging between 75% and 82%, are adjudicated within a year, with delayed cases representing a minority that cannot be extrapolated to generalize the efficacy of the legal system.

Prosecutorial actions against individuals who perpetrate acts of violence against the disabled

Concerning this matter, the Iraqi Penal Code stipulates impartial sanctions for perpetrators of assaults, alongside pertinent legislation such as the Law Safeguarding Public Gatherings and the Legislation Governing Criminal Procedures, specifically Articles 233 to 242, which delineate infractions and delineate the procedures for legal redress. The Iraqi legislative body has conscientiously addressed this issue. Similarly, the Legislation Safeguarding the Entitlements and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities, as articulated in Law No. 22 of 2011, as amended by Law No. 8 of 2021, underscores the gravity of this matter.

Implement a surveillance framework aimed at averting instances of torture and other manifestations of severe or inhumane treatment within all contexts where individuals with disabilities experience deprivation of liberty. Additionally, devise a grievance resolution mechanism accessible to individuals with disabilities for prompt recourse.

Regarding the oversight and prevention of torture, as well as addressing grievances from individuals with disabilities, the tribunal extends its accessibility to all, particularly when a person with a disability or an accused individual alleges torture. Upon receiving such allegations and upon the tribunal's satisfaction thereof, the matter shall be referred to a medical committee for impartial evaluation.

The tribunal will adjudicate the veracity of the allegation, and if substantiated, appropriate legal recourse will be pursued against the perpetrator. Additionally, the Office of the Prosecutor General holds a pivotal role in these proceedings, being empowered to initiate legal action directly against any party implicated in the torture of the accused.

Ensure the implementation of effective and secure mechanisms for dispensing justice and providing restitution to individuals subjected to torture when reporting any criminal incident.

In reference to this stipulation, it is imperative to establish secure avenues for the administration of justice and redress for victims of torture. Specifically, the aggrieved party maintains the entitlement to pursue legal recourse, particularly in accordance with the statutes outlined in Law No. 15 of 2010, pertaining to compensation for detainees and convicts.

With regards to the combatting of corruption, the judicial system shall diligently endeavor to eradicate this scourge through its adjudications and the enforcement of pertinent legislation. To this end, the Anti-Corruption Investigative Court (Integrity) has been instituted and is diligently fulfilling its mandate.

The death penalty

The implementation of capital punishment in the Kurdistan Region has undergone a significant reduction in recent years. Despite a decrease in the number of individuals sentenced to death, statistics from 2022 indicate that 439 individuals, including 11 foreign nationals, received such sentences within the region's penitentiaries. Notably, in 2022, 41 individuals faced the death penalty, with (3) of them having their sentences commuted to life imprisonment. It appears that no executions have taken place within the past five years.

Trial of ISIS terrorists

- The adjudication of individuals affiliated with ISIS adheres strictly to established legal tenets. A dedicated investigatory tribunal and a specialized judicial body are convened to address such cases. Legal representation is provided by the government, with remuneration sourced from the Judicial Council's allocated funds. In 2021, the judicature rendered verdicts in (157) instances, followed by (122) cases in 2022.
- The process of extraditing foreign suspects within the Kurdistan Region encompasses two distinct facets. Firstly, those found guilty of offenses committed within the Kurdistan Region face prosecution in regional courts. Secondly, individuals apprehended within the Kurdistan Region for crimes perpetrated beyond its borders are subject to adjudication in accordance with articles 357 to 368 of the Principles of Criminal Procedure Law.
- Given Iraq's non-affiliation with the International Criminal Court (ICC) and hurdles posed by the federal administration, prosecuting ISIS for international crimes like genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity is impeded. Nevertheless, collaborative endeavors with UNITAD are underway to explore avenues for resolution.

Observation Regarding the Prosecution of ISIS terrorists

- The establishment of specialized judicial entities in both Iraq and the Kurdistan Region aligns with the provisions set forth in Article 95 of the Iraqi permanent constitution. This article, while primarily addressing regular legal procedures, accommodates exceptional circumstances such as those arising from the emergence of ISIS and the resulting turmoil, allowing for the establishment of specialized courts as deemed necessary.
- The Supreme Judicial Council of the Federal Government holds authority over courts and regions under federal jurisdiction, while the Judicial Council of the Kurdistan Region operates independently, overseeing judicial affairs within the region's boundaries.
- Within the Kurdistan Region, the enactment of legislation to prosecute individuals associated with ISIL is justified by the humanitarian crises and casualties occurring within its territory. Additionally, ISIL members voluntarily surrendered to the security forces of the Kurdistan Regional Government, necessitating legal processes within the region.
- Notably, ISIS detainees themselves have expressed a preference for trial within the Kurdistan Region, citing the perceived impartiality and fairness of the region's judiciary compared to that of Baghdad, which they view as potentially politicized.
- Granting exclusive prosecutorial authority to the federal government could pose challenges in meeting international obligations and adhering to UN standards. Furthermore, such an approach risks depriving the Kurdistan Region of its constitutionally sanctioned rights.

Independence of the Judiciary:

- Following the enactment of the Iraqi Constitution in 2005, which delineated the powers of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches, a significant milestone was reached in 2007 with the implementation of Judiciary Law No. 23 of 2007, effectively separating the judiciary from the executive arm.
- Under the provisions of the aforementioned law, the judiciary operates independently, ensuring impartiality akin to the executive and legislative bodies. Notably, the Presidencies of the Courts of Appeal, totaling four, are under the purview of the Judicial Council in matters of administration and finance, yet remain autonomous in adjudicating decisions in accordance with pertinent laws within the Kurdistan Region.

Repealing Discriminatory Articles Affecting Women:

- Efforts are underway to suspend Article 377 of the Iraqi Penal Code, with similar strides being made to address the discriminatory content found within Article 380. Additionally, Article 398, concerning the marriage of a perpetrator to their victim, has been expunged from legal statutes.
- In the Kurdistan Region, the courts received 585 applications related to instances of violence in 2021, a number that decreased to 374 in 2022. Across all judicial bodies, a total of 2,204 cases of violence were recorded in 2021, decreasing to 1,627 in 2022. Furthermore, ten cases of homicide were documented over the span of these two years.

Addressing Discrimination Against Individuals with Disabilities

- The imperative to combat discrimination against individuals with disabilities is enshrined in the constitutional framework, wherein the state is tasked with overseeing their welfare, as stipulated by Law No. 22 of 2011 within the region. Ensuring equitable gender treatment, facilitating access to healthcare, and providing suitable compensatory measures are fundamental tenets underscored by legislative mandates. The alignment of Law No. 22 of 2011 with international standards, particularly the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, necessitates concerted inter-ministerial collaboration among the Ministries of Health, Labor, Social Affairs, and Education, complemented by the support of pertinent UN agencies. Additionally, while Law No. 22 of (2020) endeavors to extend health insurance coverage to all segments of society under the Iraqi government's purview, such comprehensive legislation remains absent within the Kurdistan Region. It is hence proposed that parliamentary initiatives be pursued to either incorporate this law or promulgate a distinct statute for its enforcement.
- Furthermore, the principle of equality before the law is upheld, safeguarding individuals with disabilities against discriminatory practices. Despite commendable efforts, including the Ministry of Labor's provision of 40 training sessions and workshops aimed at empowering disabled individuals in political and civil spheres, the full realization of their rights remains elusive.

Conducting judicial training sessions

The judiciary is steadfast in its commitment to enhancing the competency and awareness of judges, prosecutors, and judicial personnel at large. This endeavor is pursued through active participation in diverse training programs both domestically and internationally, facilitated by local and global entities.

The training landscape for the years 2021-2022 unfolded as follows:

- 2021: 46 judges
- 2022: 67 judges

These training initiatives, organized by esteemed bodies such as UN agencies, European nations, and the United States, have centered on legal frameworks and pertinent court-related topics. Specifically, the curriculum has delved into areas including counterterrorism, anti-money laundering, judicial transparency, narcotics, human rights, the prevention of violence against women, and the combatting of human trafficking.

- Concerning the selection of judges, Judicial Law No. 23 of 2007 delineates the criteria and procedures for judicial appointments, while the Regional Judicial Institute Law No. 2009 elaborates on the protocols for such appointments. Upon admission to the Judicial Institute, aspiring judges undergo a comprehensive two-year curriculum encompassing both theoretical and practical aspects of judicial duties. Successful completion of examinations culminates in appointments tailored to the exigencies of the courts.

Presently, the Regional Courts of Appeal comprise 232 judges, including 48 female judges.

The matter concerning judicial integrity

- Following the enactment of the amended Corruption Commission Law No. 23 of 2011, the judiciary established the Court of Investigation of Integrity and diligently processed the cases presented. Upon thorough investigation, decisions were made to refer the cases to the Criminal Court for adjudication and subsequent imposition of penalties upon those found guilty. However, there remains an absence of classification of cases based on the nature of corruption.

Procedures essential for the implementation of the recommendations set forth by the Judicial Council

Following a series of workshops and roundtable discussions, the Office of the Coordinator for International Advocacy has devised specific measures. These measures have been directed by the Office of the Prime Minister to pertinent stakeholders, including the Judicial Council, for prompt action.

Dedicated to addressing the issue of domestic violence.

- Advocate for the exchange of pertinent information regarding domestic violence investigations between judicial authorities and law enforcement personnel through established channels, facilitating the provision of relevant documentation and supplementary materials to the presiding judge.
- Call for the expeditious establishment, in accordance with the Kurdistan Regional Judiciary Law No. 23 of 2007 and Article 3 of the Law against Domestic Violence No. 8 of 2011, of dedicated courts for the investigation and adjudication of domestic violence cases within each provincial center.
- Recommend specialized training initiatives for judges tasked with adjudicating domestic violence cases, including those involving crimes perpetrated under the guise of honor.
- Advocate for the assignment of a sufficient number of judges from the current pool of criminal court judges to preside over domestic violence cases of a criminal nature, as judges in dedicated domestic violence courts may lack requisite criminal law expertise.

Dedicated to the eradication of torture and cruel treatment:

- Ensure adherence to legal frameworks during the pre-trial detention phase, with extensions strictly in line with Article 109 of the Fundamental Criminal Justice Act.
- Upon allegations of torture implicating an investigative entity, promptly refer both the complainant and the torture case to the presiding judge or judicial investigator for immediate inquiry, overseen by the designated prosecutor, without exemption based on professional status.

- Implement measures to promptly dismiss any testimony obtained under duress by the court, placing the onus on the prosecution to demonstrate the arbitrary nature of the accused's statements and amplify the involvement of forensic experts in addressing allegations of torture.
- Develop specialized training programs for investigative personnel, authorized staff, and correctional supervisors, featuring instruction from esteemed members of the Judicial Council and the Attorney General, focusing on best practices in detainee and convict management, among other pertinent topics.

Dedicated to upholding the principles of freedom of expression and ensuring unfettered access to information:

- It is imperative for the judiciary to adhere to the stipulations outlined in Law No. 35 of 2007. The Judicial Council is encouraged to issue comprehensive directives or guidelines to the courts, underscoring the application of the Journalism Act in adjudicating cases involving journalists acting within the realm of journalistic duty.
- Drawing upon the expertise of the federal judicial system, it is recommended to consider establishing a dedicated tribunal for cases involving journalists, thereby mitigating the risk of partial treatment within any particular court.
- Streamlining the initial stages of legal proceedings concerning journalistic matters aligns with the principles set forth in Guideline No. 4 of 1987 and the Appendix to Civil Procedure Law No. 83 of 1969, which advocate for expeditious resolution of cases within a timeframe not exceeding two months.

Specializing in the administration of correctional facilities and detention centers

- Addressing the deficiency in judicial infrastructure contributing to prolonged or indefinite detention of individuals.
- Facilitating the release of all minors not formally charged with a criminal offense and adhering to international protocols for juvenile justice, ensuring compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Expanding the parameters of parole, encompassing half the sentence duration for juveniles and two-thirds for adults involved in severe offenses.

Dedicated to promoting human organ donation and transplantation

- Resolving legal matters through judicial channels, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and security agencies, concerning instances of fraud and discrepancies in organ transplantation cases.

Dedicated to eradicating human trafficking:

- Propose the appointment of a dedicated magistrate to preside over cases of trafficking in persons.
- Foster collaboration with the Central Committee for Combating Human Trafficking, with a particular emphasis on instances of sex trafficking, and prosecute perpetrators accordingly.
- Develop comprehensive guidelines delineating various criminal offenses and corresponding sentencing parameters. This is essential given the nuanced distinctions between human trafficking, prostitution, begging, and organ donation, as outlined in both the Iraqi Penal Code and the Law against Prostitution (No. 8 of 1988). Such clarity is crucial for the judiciary to accurately differentiate between these offenses and administer appropriate penalties.
- Heighten efforts to combat the trafficking of women and girls, ensuring expedient and impartial investigations, and imposing sanctions on perpetrators.
- Implement capacity-building initiatives, including specialized training programs for judges and forensic investigators, aimed at enhancing their ability to identify victims of human trafficking and discern relevant criminal activities within the framework of pertinent legislation.

Regarding drugs and psychotropic substances:

- Strict sanctions for drug trafficking are imperative, with sentences tailored to the specific substance involved. For instance, prioritizing the gravity of crystal, a substance of significant concern, which currently ranks 6th in severity. The penalties for its use, currently capped at 5 years, ought to be revisited in light of its dangers, while substances like heroin and cocaine merit a more rigorous penalty, set at 16 years.
- Establishing a cadre of specialized judges dedicated to drug-related cases is essential. These judges should undergo continuous training to deepen their understanding of both legal nuances and the psychological complexities surrounding offenders. Stability within this judicial body is crucial to ensure consistency and expertise in handling such sensitive matters.
- Stricter penalties concerning drug trafficking and use within educational institutions and universities must be enacted. These environments demand heightened vigilance to safeguard the well-being of students and faculty.
- Augmenting the number of investigators assigned to drug-related cases is paramount. Adequate staffing levels are essential to prevent legal detentions from exceeding the stipulated duration outlined in the Principles of Criminal Justice Act No. 23 of 1971, as amended.
- Urgent measures are warranted to bolster the forensic management's capacity to conduct thorough investigations in this domain. Enhancing forensic capabilities is instrumental in strengthening the evidentiary backbone of drug-related cases.
- Deliberate efforts are needed to provide comprehensive training for judges and investigators under the Kurdistan Regional Government's jurisdiction. This training should prioritize

equipping personnel with the skills necessary for empathetic and effective engagement with individuals struggling with addiction, reframing them as individuals in need of treatment rather than solely as criminals.

On the matter of the rights of individuals with disabilities:

- Guarantee unhindered access for individuals with cognitive, social, or intellectual impairments, as well as those with visual and auditory limitations, to judicial channels. This entails the removal of all barriers and the facilitation of readily accessible information, thereby safeguarding their entitlement to equitable engagement in all legal proceedings on par with their peers.

Statistics of the Judicial Council from January 2023 to December 2023

Table 67 Statistics of cases pending and settled in the provinces of the Kurdistan Region

court	outcome	The total
Court of Appeals	in front of the court	6796
	It's been settled	5731
crime	in front of the court	8011
	It's been settled	3904
Catton	in front of the court	50203
	It's been settled	31734
Juveniles	in front of the court	2716
	It's been settled	2313
investigate	in front of the court	170659
	It's been settled	126873
Civil status	in front of the court	645
	It's been settled	635
Personal status	in front of the court	41387
	It's been settled	32578
work	in front of the court	784
	It's been settled	497
Preliminary	in front of the court	34952
	It's been settled	23787
trade	in front of the court	421

	It's been settled	248
customs	in front of the court	123
	It's been settled	116
Personal Affairs	in front of the court	388
	It's been settled	316
Combating Domestic Violence (Katten)	in front of the court	1729
	It's been settled	1071
Combating Domestic Violence (Research)	in front of the court	12870
	It's been settled	9766

Transactions conducted in the courts of the Kurdistan Region from 1st January 2023 to 31st December 2023

Table 68 Statistics of transactions conducted in the courts of the Kurdistan Region

Transaction Type	The total
Engagement	53087
Allowing second wife	83
Approval of external engagement	3613
Divorce and separation	14312
Assignment	1817
Parental documentation	119
Recommendation	886
The curriculum vitae	1353
Document of dissolution	420
Birth certificate	6918
Death letter	10484
Legitimate division	12175
Disclosure abandoned	140
in taking responsibility	9

Other documents	3293
Quick examine	311
Gathered	218
Representation	420
Legal division	818
Supervision of elections	–
Other transactions	149
Spreading Islam	7
Adoption documents	–
Reduction of dowry	11
Fragmented transactions	42
The total	110685