



هجرة آمنة  
HIJRA AMINA  
SAFE MIGRATION FOR IRAQ



THE IRAQ-EU-IOM JOINTLY RUN ADVANCED ASSISTED MIGRATION INITIATIVE

## FLASH REPORT



“Creating a network between Iraqis abroad and the Government of Iraq to facilitate their contribution to the development of the country from remote is as important as fostering sustainable temporary or permanent return of the Iraqi diaspora.” *-Michael Newson, IOM Regional Thematic Specialist in Labour Migration and Human Development*

July  
6-9  
2015

## IOM Iraq convenes senior Government of Iraq officials to develop strategic recommendations on how to reach out to Iraqis abroad

With a view of understanding and strengthening potential for the diverse range of Iraqi expertise and skills abroad to support the country's development, IOM Iraq's EU funded HIJRA AMINA Programme conducted a workshop on "Government Engagement with Iraqis Abroad" from 6-9 July 2015 in Erbil. The workshop brought together a Member

of Parliament of the Parliamentary Committee of Deportees, Displaced and Expatriates, a representative of the Foreign Relations Committee and 17 senior officials from the Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Migration and Displacement, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and Ministry of Higher Education.



“By reaching out to Iraqis abroad our Ministry intends to promote development projects resulting in reduction of unemployment, economic growth and poverty alleviation.”

**Representative, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs**



“The Iraqi diaspora is an ‘army’ abroad filled with knowledge, skills and experience ready to enrich our country, which is why this workshop is a much needed step forward in a good direction.”

**Zahed Mohammed Sultan, Parliamentary Committee of Deportees, Displaced and Expatriates**

During the four-day workshop, HIJRA AMINA provided a platform for high level officials to foster governmental synergies towards developing a targeted strategy to promote engagement of the Iraqi diaspora in the socio-economic development of Iraq. By reinforcing the exchange of knowledge, skills and technical capacities among Iraqi nationals, the Government of Iraq can forward the mobilization of competencies of Iraqis abroad to enhance the country’s development. Despite the challenging security situation in the country, the workshop demonstrated the importance of a proactive approach by the Government of Iraq to create a network with high-value segments within the Iraqi diaspora keep to support future return.

Through a series of practical sessions and case studies, Michael Newson -IOM Regional Thematic Specialist in Labour Migration and Human Development- guided participants through a series of governmental strategies and policies implemented in the countries of China, India, Ireland, Korea and Taiwan, which have all taken bold steps to engage their diaspora. These countries have proven to be success stories in the promotion of diaspora engagement, and have engaged their diasporas to positively contribute to their countries’ economic advancement.

Furthermore, given the strong interest demonstrated by participants throughout the sessions in IOM’s support in the field of Migration and Development, IOM’s expert also provided an overview of several IOM initiatives, namely MIDA (program promoting temporary return of qualified African nationals), MEDMA (program fostering Moroccan diaspora to invest in new businesses back home) and NARWI (crowdfunding platform to support small entrepreneurship in the Arab world).



“In engaging with the Iraqi diaspora our Ministry aims at pulling scientific knowledge and expertise back to Iraq in order to boost research and capacitate the young generation.”

**Representative, Ministry of Higher Education**

IOM Iraq, through HIJRA AMINA, has been instrumental in creating a forum for dynamic interaction among governmental officials through open discussions on the need for an institutional framework that would foster inter-ministerial coordination. Such a mechanism would further support the establishment of a common communication strategy targeting Iraqis abroad. Participants agreed that the main objective of the strategy should be the establishment of strong and

long-lasting linkages between expatriate experts and communities of origin, as well as the promotion of the future sustainable return of the Iraqi diaspora. The end result was the mapping of concrete policy recommendations aimed at building a foundation upon which the Government of Iraq can develop a strong and effective strategic policy response for diaspora engagement that can contribute to the country’s economic and social development.



“One of the main challenges of the Government of Iraq is to rebuild trust between the Iraqi diaspora and the Government, which was broken during the previous regime.”

**Representative, Ministry of Planning**

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